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## The Crisis of Faith

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**W**HEN the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?

This tremendous questioning of Jesus Christ points to the ultimate crisis of faith. For if at the end of the world, when history will have consummated itself, when man will have exhausted his possibilities, when culture and civilization will have yielded all their secrets and borne all their fruits, if then at the end of time, when one may at least hope that man will have learned something, it is still questionable whether there will be faith on earth, how hopeless the situation must be "between the times" when history still has something to say.

This then is our natural lot: to be faithless. No matter how faithful we

might be, we can only—like the man of old—cry out with tears, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." And frankly, unless He Himself came to our help from outside, we should soon lapse back into utter faithlessness.

It is not my intention to discuss this radical faithlessness of ours, although every other form of unbelief is ultimately grounded in it. I have thought it necessary, however, to call attention to this human condition so as to be able from the outset to place in its right perspective the great crisis of faith through which we are passing today.

The present phenomena of lack of faith are legion.

People are nauseatingly superfi-

cial: there is no depth in them. It is inconceivable that the stout men of faith of the past, meeting the typical modern man, with all his cleverness and chatter, would not turn away their faces in disgust.

Even the best thinkers cut a sorry figure. They are not lonely enough, they do not walk on those high, cold, icy precipices of which Nietzsche spoke. They are so superficial, so confused, so unconvincing, so unconvinced themselves, so comfortable and happy. The hand of the Lord is not on them.

But for the grace of God flowing through the Church and but for certain glimpses of light reflected by the universities, the humble folk are without authentic guidance. But it is of such humble folk that the Kingdom of Heaven is composed.

People trust machines and external things: they do not trust ideas. They seek action and results: they do not seek a state of mind. They are impatient with reasoned convictions. In place of the spirit of truth, a spirit at harmony with itself because it rests on ideas and principles, they seek sensation and excitement. They hug material things. They hug them as ends in themselves. They have faith in them. That material things are symbols of something higher, that they are sacraments of the world of the spirit, all this is strange to our modern world.

The present world does not point

beyond itself. Its mind is not elsewhere. Its mind is on itself.

There is nothing above, nothing beyond, nothing in whose secret presence we are judged. Whatever you can do and get away with it, go ahead and do it. If you are unseen, you are simply unseen. And there is no invisible law, no unseen judge who will surely reward or punish you in secret, whether or not you are seen by the eyes of men.

#### WORLD OF SENSE

The whole dimension of the invisible, the transcendent, the awesome, the behind and the beyond and the above, the ground and the condition, the original and the remote, the Presence, this whole dimension is practically lost. We seem to live in a flat world of our immediate senses and our pathetic fears. And joy is gone, the wonderful joy of fearing only God and putting the world where it belongs.

We cannot then say that ours is an age of faith. On the contrary, we must affirm that there is a terrible crisis of faith in the world today. I believe the deepest view of our present tribulation is to say that faith, real creative faith, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," has to an alarming extent departed from the earth.

And yet it is my belief that man cannot live without faith. If you give him the whole world but deny him

access by faith to the unseen, to the hoped-for, he will become profoundly unhappy. Of all the tasks facing Western civilization today, the greatest, the most important is how to bring faith back to the hearts of men.

### THREE TASKS

Three mighty tasks challenge the Western world today.

The first is the task of building up an adequate defense for the free world. The non-Communist world will be without excuse whatsoever if it does not act on the certainty that where Communism could strike and could get away with it, it would strike. Either the West is aware of its mortal danger and is prepared to take adequate measures to meet it, or it slumbers, in which case it is already overcome.

The formation of the North Atlantic Community is a tremendous event. If the Western European and North American nations are given the time to integrate themselves into a closely knit military, political, economic and cultural community, they will constitute, by reason of the enormous spiritual and material resources at their command, a core of strength and health wholly impregnable to Communist assault.

No matter how much certain sections of the West have suffered, I think it is fair to say that the West as a whole has been living in a fool's paradise. Its estimate of the nature and magnitude of the peril and of the exertions it must make to meet it has been almost childishly inadequate. It seems therefore that any concentration on building up the military defense these days is justifiable.

The second major challenge of the awakened West is to stand, energetically and consistently, for those economic and political conditions whose absence has been precisely the cause of the spread of Communism and of the other corrosives of Western civilization.

This means promoting real democracy, at home and abroad, where the people can freely and actively determine their own government. A situation in which the West preaches and practices democracy at home, while at the same time allying itself with autocratic reactionary regimes abroad, where there is no freedom or participation of the people in their own government, is at once unhappy and unstable.

It means further that the West must share the material goods of the

earth with the rest of the world in greater liberality. It is impossible for Western civilization to defend itself against Communism so long as between Moscow and Washington there are teeming billions of human beings who have never known anything except poverty, privation and the ever-present menace of starvation, and to whom Moscow means, truly or falsely, that an end will be put to their eternal misery. It is impossible for Western civilization to defend itself against the onslaught of Communism so long as the standard of living in the United States is ten to a hundred times higher than what it is throughout Asia, and so long as the United States and the rest of the West do nothing effective about it.

In my opinion, the present financial implications of Point Four must be multiplied literally a hundred times before anywhere near the preliminary conditions for counteracting the Communist challenge on the material plane can be fulfilled. This is no sentimental act of philanthropy; this is a genuine feeling of human solidarity in a magically contracted world. Also from the point of view of security and prosperity, it will pay in the long run abundant dividends. There is no getting away from the fundamental spiritual maxim: to retain the enjoyment of your liberties and goods, you must liberally share them with others.

Unless a civilization is sure of its

ultimate values, its military, economic and political defenses will sooner or later be weighed and found utterly wanting. Civilizations have perished not so much because they have been materially weak as because they lost their soul and ceased to have a fighting faith in themselves as bearers of light and being to the entire world. In fact they crumbled materially and politically only because they had initially weakened spiritually. And conversely, a handful of helpless people gathering together at first as the scum of the earth, wearing a perfectly ridiculous aspect, but having been granted a vision of the truth, no matter how imperfect, and rising to the simplicity of faith, faith in the truth as they saw it and in themselves as bearers of the truth, have again and again conquered empires and transformed the face of the earth.

The absolute necessity for military, political and economic preparedness at the present time cannot be over-emphasized. But precisely because the needs in these fields are so incontestably overpowering, there is a grave danger that the great requirements of the spirit will be unduly lost sight of.

The greatest task of the Western world at the present moment is, concurrently with its military, economic and political preparedness, to articulate adequately what it ultimately stands for. The basic values of Western civilization must be brought out



and proclaimed in all clarity, conviction and boldness.

It is not true that men fight best in self-preservation. This may be true of animals, but certainly it is not true of men. Men are primarily moved by ideas. Grant them a certain vision of the truth, and they will rise to pinnacles of heroism utterly unattainable by those who live and die only to preserve themselves. Men live by faith. Grant them a fighting faith whereby they are sure that the values they believe in are supreme, and they will move mountains.

#### FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

Communism provides a fighting faith, namely, impersonal, dialectical materialism. But the Western world has a fighting faith that is infinitely deeper and truer than this primitive faith of Communism. Only this Western faith must be rediscovered, reactivated and reaffirmed. The greatest service that can be done to Western society today is to reawaken it to the positive faith of its fathers.

The West, with the Atlantic Community as the central core, is the integral heir of the Graeco-Roman-Hebrew - Christian - Mediterranean - European humane tradition. For 4,000 years profound and sustained interaction between diverse peoples and cultures resulted in this wonderful synthesis. There is no similar cumulative richness of spirit, no comparable internal conscious reflection,

anywhere else in the world. Communism has cut itself away from and rebelled against this tradition, and all in the name of "material progress"; and it is this act of self-separation and rebellion that is going to mean its undoing in the end. Once this residue of faith is reactivated and proclaimed, once the deposit of the ages is known and loved and believed in, then Western man will realize what is at stake in the great spiritual contest of the moment, and there will be no limit to the level of joyful sacrifice and quiet self-confidence to which he will rise.

I shall therefore now suggest in barest outline what I believe to be the elements of the Western faith, the basic findings of the last 4,000 years, findings which mankind can overlook or rebel against only at its supreme peril.

1. There is an objective truth to be sought and found, a truth about nature, man, society, history and the final things.

2. There is thus a natural law and order to which we must submit if we are to be happy.

3. There is an hierarchy of being, an order of values, a higher and a lower in the scale of things. Good consists in rejoicing in and obeying this order; evil, in trying to subvert it.

4. Human reason, thoroughly disciplined in the cumulative positive tradition, is perfectly adequate, by

free and critical inquiry, to discover this truth, this law and this hierarchy.

5. Man is free to be or not to be in the truth. He is free to rebel against nature. But as surely as the night follows the day, if he rebels, he will have to pay a heavy price by way of suffering and death.

6. Our freedom of thought, conscience and decision is something absolutely sacred. It is by this freedom that we share in the perpetual act of creation. Take this freedom away from man, and he is immediately dehumanized.

7. The other person is never a means only, but always also an end. Therefore his humanity must be respected.

8. The human person does not exist for the sake of society and the state: on the contrary, society and the state exist for the sake of the human person.

9. History is not all in vain; we do not start all over again. There is a real, positive heritage accumulated over the past 4,000 years. This heritage of truth and being is the most precious thing in the world.

10. There is a God. He is a living person. He created heaven and earth and has authentically revealed Himself in history. His essence is love, He has suffered for our sins, and He always forgives.

11. The intellectual and spiritual principles in man are supreme over any other principle. Thus our pri-

mary duty is to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. The material is derivative from the spiritual.

12. Man—you and I in the first person—is destined to eternal life. Our present life is a mockery and a hopeless unintelligibility without reference to the next.

This body of doctrine is the soul of the West. It is what has made the West to be itself. It is a permanent acquisition of the human spirit. I believe heaven and earth will perish, but this deposit of truth and certainty will never pass away. This is the fighting faith of the West, this is the standard under which alone the West can be true to itself. And if a life-or-death struggle is forced upon Western civilization, this is the ensign of truth in whose name alone it can win.

#### PRICELESS HERITAGE UNDER ATTACK

People must realize the ultimate things that are in the balance. For what is ultimately in the balance is not this or that government, not this or that economic system, not this or that person who happens to be in power today, not the home and the hearth and the children, but the dearest persuasions and certainties of the last 4,000 years. What is under ruthless attack is nothing short of reason, order, nature, truth, freedom, human dignity, history, God, love and the higher things. It is these matters, without which there would never be

light and culture in Europe and America today, that are systematically undermined, ridiculed, denied, conspired against. There is a determined attempt to see that they are eradicated from the surface of the earth. When people take in the concrete significance of their beleaguered heritage, it is impossible for them to remain any more in doubt: they will rise to the highest pitch of certainty and resolve.

#### ALIEN GODS

The tragedy of the present moment is that many people have lost faith in one or another article of this priceless intellectual and spiritual heritage of the West. They worship alien gods. The present crisis is fundamentally one of faith, faith in the abiding values which have been culled from the sweat and tears of the ages. And therefore the battle is as much against this widespread loss of faith within the Western world itself, as against the foreign enemies. In fact there would be today no foreign enemies at all if faith in the spirit and the mind had not weakened. The fundamental battle is against cynicism, uprootedness, self-estrangement and despair.

The question is not merely to *defend* your values. You can never defend what you do not initially believe. And if you truly apprehend what these things that I have set forth above concretely meant and

continue to mean in your civilization, you will never be satisfied merely with "defending" them. You will want, then, to share them with others. Whatever may be true or not true in military matters, in things spiritual it is certain that offense is the best and in fact the only defense. For mere defense is in reality halfheartedness and unbelief. Just as the Communists believe that they are not secure until the world is made safe for Communism, so the free world must believe that it is not secure until the whole world is made safe for reason, truth, human dignity and freedom.

The reaffirmation of the soul of Western civilization cannot be only something intellectual. It is true the mind must first see these things very clearly and become completely convinced of them. The intellectual articulation of the supreme values at stake today—an articulation at once lucid, responsible, grounded, authentic, convinced and therefore convincing—is one of the primary necessities of the world situation. Western thinkers, poets and saints can do no greater service to themselves and to their own civilization than to combine in a mighty endeavor to elucidate and articulate the core of truth in their common heritage.

We cannot, however, stop there. The crying need for us temporal creatures is for objectification. A union between men of thought and prayer, and men of action, must therefore be

consummated, to the end that the integral truth of the West be made a living reality. There is no institution that does not stand in need of reconsideration and rejuvenation once the vision of the truth dawns upon the minds of men.

The task is not easy. Never has a generation faced a more stupendous one. It is useless for us to try to do it on our own power. It cannot be done. The Lord must oversee and inspire. For this is His world "and without him was not anything made that was made."

Consequently, if we love Him above everything we know or desire;

if our sins, which are many and which will continue to be many, are not permitted to interfere in this love;

if at the foot of His Cross we are able to shed tears of joy;

if the cross which He graciously assigns to us is borne with gladness;

if when we are on the brink we

call on Him and He surely comes to our aid despite our sin;

if we bless His holy name in the morning and in the evening and when we taste hell;

if we see His face in the eyes of the humble and the lowly of the world;

if we know His grace and the power of His word;

if we crave for the unity of His Church more than for anything else;

if we pray and watch for His Second Coming;

and if after being deceived by money and position and possessions and achievements and culture and friendship, and above all, after we are thoroughly deceived by ourselves, we turn to Him in complete, unwavering trust, accepting everything, expecting nothing;

then I believe He will surely have compassion on us and come to the rescue of His inheritance.



### *Watch the Epithets*

We in the labor press field ought to be careful lest we fall into the habit of condemning universally "the bosses" "big business" "the rich." Some bosses are tyrants. Some businesses are too big, to the exclusion of competition. Some people are too rich. And some people are too poor.

But we cannot logically oppose all bosses, all business, all the rich. That is class warfare. The legitimate objective of labor organizations is, among other things, to make the worker richer. To do this, it is not necessary to make the rich poor, or to oppose the rich or business as a class.

—THE WAGE EARNER, September, 1950.

## A Look at Advertising

ADOLPH SCHALK

*Reprinted from the GRAIL\**

**S**HE ripped the telephone from the wall and threw it across the room. She was an advertising copy-writer for a leading women's dress shop. She was pretty. She had red hair. And she was very angry.

"I won't write ads that mislead the public!" she cried. "I won't, I won't, I won't!"

Such was the reaction of a Catholic ad writer who was asked to write a dishonest advertisement. "When it was all over," she explained, "I cried for two hours."

She had every reason to cry. After spending four years in the advertising field, Mary McQuade (as we shall call her) is fed up . . . through . . . finished. To heck with advertising! Let's try something else. For Mary believes that before you can make improvements within the field of advertising, you have to change the entire system of selling.

"For a Catholic especially," she says, "the work is a constant tension. As a Catholic you feel it is your duty to do your job well. But in advertising you are constantly torn between two loyalties. The better you are able to say subtle things that are not quite moral and not quite im-

moral, the better you do your job. You are under a moral obligation to earn your money, but the better you do your job, the worse Catholic you are."

When she first entered the advertising business, Mary McQuade thought it would be interesting and glamorous. She was not far from wrong. She soon discovered the thrill of writing an ad and then watching forty people come into the store to buy the shoes or dresses she advertised.

"But it took me a long time to realize the price I had to pay for all this excitement," she said. "At first it was just a game. Agents would take me to dinner, and I learned how to deal with people in the business world. Partly through these contacts, and partly because of my interest in merchandising, I became aware of the big and little deceptions in advertising. The average ad writer doesn't know whether an ad's a fake. He doesn't have time to learn about the products he is advertising, and as a result he usually has to take the chance that his words may mislead the public.

Mary explained how some of this

\* St. Meinrad, Ind., January, 1951.

deception occurs. When a firm advertises certain items with certain prices, sometimes the ads are honest, sometimes they aren't. If there is a clearance sale on shoes, say, and they are marked down from \$7.50 to \$5.00 merely because the manager wants to get rid of the stock, then he is legitimately advertising his wares at a saving to the customer. But quite often a firm will get a large supply of shoes or dresses or some other item at a very low price and then advertise these products as being worth much more than they really are. One trick often used is this: A company will buy a large stock of shoes that cost about \$3.00 a pair. The ad will blare: "SALE! \$7.50 Shoes for \$5.00." Such advertising is immoral, but it goes on all the time. A furniture salesman told how the price of sets of furniture was marked up \$100 for each set, merely because the sets were moved to the second floor. (The sets on the second floor are described by salesmen for the store as "better quality.")

"Not only did the ethics of advertising bother me," Mary continued, "but the constant pressure I was under made me very uneasy. I had to work twelve hours a day for \$60 a week, and though the pay was good, the nerve-wracking strain wasn't worth it."

So Mary McQuade quit the advertising business. She is not alone in her protest.

Though it is difficult to know just where to begin reforming this huge multi-million dollar business, thinking men and women, both inside and outside the advertising field, are beginning to realize that something must be done about the abuses that advertising has foisted on the public. Advertising is not wrong in itself. The merchant has the right to let the public know where to buy necessities; it is his duty to provide this service for them. But there is a great need to change the emphasis of advertising from *greed* and *profits* to *service*, and to do this according to moral principles and the dictates of good taste.

#### VOLUNTARY CLEANSING

We do not have to loose a tirade against advertising; we can find men and women in the field of advertising who will do that for us. In a recent issue of *Advertising and Selling*—a recognized advertising journal—advertisers and their agents severely criticized the abuses of the business. In it, Mark Wiseman, a well-known adman, suggests that too often advertising has the effect of kicking the customer in the teeth.

John Benson, in that same issue, suggested a code of good advertising deportment, a code suggesting the voluntary cleansing of advertising by its practitioners. The code mentioned twenty major abuses, such as untrue scientific statements, faked testimony,

als, exaggerated health claims, and the omission of pertinent facts.

In view of all this, it is difficult to make sense of advertising when twenty or thirty brands of a certain product all claim to be "better." *Better than what* we might ask. Only people do not ask that question. They gullibly accept the advertiser's word for it.

There are a number of organizations that do not take the advertiser's word for it. One of them is the National Bureau of Standards. Another is the American Standards Association. These and other technical agencies have brought forth an elaborate means of testing methods, standards and specifications of products. The reports of these organizations, unfortunately, are not widely published. Newspapers omit them because newspapers depend, for the most part, primarily on advertising for their revenue, and by carrying these reports they would expose the frauds of many of the products they advertise, and hence would offend many advertisers. These reports, however, are available in libraries and some magazines.

The Federal Trade Commission also investigates products and makes periodic reports on them. But the Commission is very slow to make those reports known. (It took the FTC six years to discover that the ads of the leading brands of cigarettes were fraudulent and mislead-

ing. By that time the cigarette companies had gained such a gigantic following that the exposé of the FTC made little difference one way or another.)

There are, nevertheless, several general steps that can be taken to reform the advertising business, both from within and from without. I shall discuss them under these heads: 1) application of advertising to its proper purpose and use; 2) customer education and reaction; 3) legislation; 4) widespread changes in store policies; 5) the establishment of organizations.

#### APPLICATION OF ADVERTISING TO ITS PROPER PURPOSE AND USE

This would require a vast educational program that would be acceptable to all schools teaching advertising in any of its forms. Seemingly impossible, this program is nevertheless the most important step of all. It will establish the right values needed to shift the emphasis of advertising from profit and greed to service and charity. This kind of reform, however, cannot take place independently. It must go hand in hand with widespread reforms of institutional and individual thinking. Any thought of a reform in the advertising business is futile and inane unless right values are established. And right values can be established only by means of right sources. These sources are to be found in liturgical living, and the



application of liturgical life to the social problems of the world.

Some foreseeable results of such a reform in advertising would be: the removal of all billboards and offensive advertising; the reduction of the voluminous quantity of advertising and its replacement by intelligent ads that are well-written and serviceable; the elimination of pornographic advertising; honesty in advertising. Certainly all this suggests the impossible, but we must aim at the perfect in order to improve the imperfect.

#### CUSTOMER EDUCATION AND REACTION

This requires a great deal of organization and cooperation. If an organization is strong enough, it can influence radio stations and the press to improve their ads, or to remove certain ads altogether. It can arouse public indignation against fraudulent and indecent and avaricious advertising. We Americans, especially the Catholics, have lost our use of the weapon of protest. We sit back and let everyone and everything walk all over us. We Catholics are much to blame for all this because we do not have a social conscience, nor do we take the trouble to understand the moral implications of modern life, including such institutions as advertising.

If the customer reaction grows strong enough, it may influence local, regional, or national politicians and

bring about legislation that will put an end to many advertising abuses. Some States already have laws against certain types of billboards. Worthless or injurious merchandise could be removed from the market and a stronger check could be made on advertising.

#### WIDESPREAD CHANCES IN STORE POLICIES

This can be achieved only if shop owners and managers *want* to change store policies regarding advertising. In most cases the only way to make them *want* these changes is by means of social pressure. So, again, the need for powerful organization is clearly indicated. Once this pressure (or possibly voluntary cooperation of managers and owners) is effective, the following procedures can be adopted:

1. They can refuse to use suggestive ads, or ads that attribute "spiritual" or "mystical" qualities to clothes that those clothes do not have. (Example: An ad for men's shorts, with the caption: "Feel like a million!" This is misleading because it suggests that the minor comforts of well-fitting shorts are equivalent to ecstatic joy. Or, another example: An ad for slacks: "Want to be high-man with the ladies? Take no chances—take it easy instead in 'Botany' slacks." This ad gives the impression that wearing "Botany" slacks will automatically win girl



friends for the wearer, implying that the slacks have a particular quality that no other slacks have and that the wearer gains a special "charm" from this particular brand of slacks.)

2. They can also eliminate ads that present their products against a luxurious background. (e.g. an illustration of a lady in an ordinary cotton dress on the private yacht of a millionaire. This ad falsely suggests that anyone buying the same cotton dress will be in the same social class as the girl on the millionaire's yacht.)

3. They can use photography rather than drawings, as sketches tend to exaggerate the appearance and quality of things.

#### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ORGANIZATIONS

Without organization, none of the above four measures is possible. What kind of organization is established depends on the needs of the place and the time. Certainly, Sodalties can be stimulated to pick up the challenge of a work like putting right Christian values into the advertising business. Catholic Action cells can be started by Catholics in the advertising field. These movements in turn can cooperate with existing organizations, such as the Better Business Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce, wherever possible.

Most important of all is the fact that any reform is basically creative

and therefore basically spiritual. It is inconceivable that any lasting achievement could be had in advertising without a study of the Christian teaching on poverty. Two excellent books to foster the right spirit are: *Rich and Poor in Christian Tradition*, edited by Walter Shewring, and containing selections from the writings of the Church Fathers and of Popes in modern times; and *Poverty* by Father P. R. Régamey, O.P.

By studying the meaning of poverty a right balance of values will be obtained by means of which it will be possible to recognize the enormous extent to which advertising is enslaved by greed and avarice.

A study of the history of advertising also should be undertaken. This is difficult because the subject is buried and scattered among many books. One book that might be helpful is Amintore Fanfani's *Catholicism, Protestantism & Capitalism*.

The important thing to remember is that while advertising is a technique, it is nevertheless, as it now exists, a part of a mystique, a way of life, and that way of life is secularism, which is the divorce of God from everyday life. Secularism has been denounced by the Bishops of the United States as the greatest evil of our times, an evil that makes Communism possible. The solution of the problem of advertising, therefore, is not a solution of technique alone, but

also one of mystique: that is, the solution, like the problem, must come about by means of a way of life. That way of life is Catholicism, not the lazy-go-to-church-on-Sunday Catholicism, but Catholicism that applies the life of the Church (the Mass and

the sacraments and the participation in the liturgy by the laity) to concrete social problems. In this way alone can advertising cease to make man *its* servant and become instead the servant of man and serve the interests of the glory of God.



### ***The Best Penance***

The best of all penance is that which God sends us. Acts of self-denial which we freely choose are precious in the sight of God. But far more precious are those sufferings which we have not chosen and which have come to us unasked. The chalice of suffering which Christ drank was bitter and unattractive. He asked His Heavenly Father that it might pass from Him. "Yet," he added, "not my will but thine be done." To accept God's will without complaint is the greatest contribution that any Christian can make to the cause of world peace.—*Cardinal Griffin in his Lenten Pastoral, 1951.*



### ***Whither the Family?***

To discuss the role of parents in an era of rapid social change is to take a fleeting glimpse at two individuals running down the street. Some of the superficial aspects of the people may be noted. Their direction at the moment is obvious, but it may be changed momentarily. Their destination, until they arrive there, is unknown by the observer. In fact, it may be unknown to the hastily moving individuals.

And so today bewildered parents attempt to define their roles in a rapidly changing society. Their certainty is of a negative kind, because this is an era which believes in the complete rejection of authority. Freedom is absolute and morality is relative, whereas Christian society has always held that morality is absolute and freedom is relative. In the almost complete absence of positive standards, the American family gropes aimlessly about trying to discover its purpose and its role in contemporary life.—*John J. Kane in the AMERICAN CATHOLIC SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW, October, 1950.*

## Mounier and Personalism

MARTIN HALEY

*Reprinted from TWENTIETH CENTURY\**

EARLY in 1950 there died in France Emmanuel Mounier, editor of the review *Esprit*, which he founded in 1932. Born at Grenoble in 1905, Mounier, after a university career that took him through the Sorbonne, became Professor of Philosophy at St. Omer. He gave up this position to found *Esprit*. "Good!" he said to his friend, Izard, at the time when they were deciding on setting up this review devoted to things of the spirit: "We are right, and we are penniless. Only enterprises founded in poverty succeed. I will give up the University and go again to Paris. I will take up editorship—assuming there will be something to edit. At any rate we cannot fare worse than the *Cahiers de la Quinzaine*. We have the will to succeed. That will be a beginning."

The *Cahiers* were, of course, Péguy's means of impact upon French opinion prior to the 1914 tragedy, and Péguy (upon whom he was an authority) was ever an inspiration to Mounier. He was also closely associated with the Russian Berdyaev, and was in a sort of general alliance with Maritain and with

Gabriel Marcel, with the Christian wing of Existentialism—which philosophy, however, was not his. Both Mounier and the Existentialists assert the inalienable dignity and importance of the human personality, but whereas the existentialists "live in the living present" and are inclined to an esoteric individualism, Mounier threw himself into the work in hand ("engaged himself," as personalists and existentialists alike say) in order to build up in the future, near or remote, a new civilization to replace our modern decadence. As the monks of St. Benedict in relation to the medieval era, so would the personalists be to the civilization of the future. Like Péguy, he sought to rally to himself all men of goodwill, and numbered among his "Amis d'Esprit" Catholics, Protestants and non-Christians. With some of these "amis" he lived a sort of community life, dying as he had lived, poor. In the *Personalist Manifesto* he wrote:

On the plane of individual ethics we believe that a certain kind of poverty is the ideal economic rule of personal life. But by poverty in this sense we do not mean an indiscreet asceticism or a shameful miserliness. We refer

\* 143 a' Beckett St., Melbourne, C. 1, Australia, September, 1950.

rather to a contempt for the material attachments that enslave, a desire for simplicity, a state of adaptability and freedom which does not exclude magnificence or generosity, nor even some striving for riches, providing such endeavors are not avaricious.

Hardly the Franciscan ideal, but nevertheless revolutionary from the get-rich-quick conceptions of modern Economic Man.

Mounier's vocation was primarily intellectual—to teach; to sow and to fertilize ideas. To such as Mounier, under the Providence of God, have been due the great intellectual and vital stirrings (e.g., the Jocists) perceptible in the France of our generation, whose purpose is no less than the renovation and restoring of all things in Christ.

### HIS "PERSONALIST MANIFESTO"

Apart from the columns of *Esprit* itself (not readily available to English readers) the best account of what Mounier stood for may be had in his *Personalist Manifesto*, which was translated about 1938. It says something for it that despite the world-shaking events that have occurred since then, little in that book, dealing in great part with politics of all sorts, needs modification today. "Nazism" and "Fascism" are treated *sub specie aeternitatis* as it were, and so live with the appeal they once possessed for many. What is written about "Communism" has not lost its cogency either.

"Gild Socialism," "Syndicalism," "Distributivism," "The Corporative State," "Primacy of the Spiritual," "Personalism"—all such movements and titles amount to much the same thing: only, Mounier and his friends appear to have been more vigorous in the fray than most who have propagated cognate ideas. There was nothing outstandingly new in Personalism beyond its name, wherein it has a certain advantage. "Gild Socialism," however different from State Socialism, has suffered because in our days all forms of Socialism are suspect, no longer capturing the prophetic imagination of the young of heart; "Distributivism" has ever in itself been an awkward, unattractive, meaning-poor word; "The Primacy of the Spiritual" is a rather frightening phrase; outside the continent "Syndicalism" seems to be nearer related to "syndicates" of the commercial world than to "syndics"; "The Corporative State," unfortunately, became mixed up with Mussolini and undue State manipulation.

On the other hand it is difficult to see how Personalism can lose its charm while "person" and "personal" are sacrosanct and linked up with the central mystery of the Divinity. Yet -ism on the end of a word has ever had debasing force, making of "individual" the ignoble "individualism," and of the warm "social" that cold "socialism" which is coming to be seen as "anti-social"

or "unsocial." From *socius*, a friend, a companion (our Australian "mateship," à la Lawson, is really the best English word for the Latin-originated "Socialism") has come a word which now designates an unfriendly bureaucrat. So there is little security in a name, though a name can mean so much for a movement. As for "person" and "personalist," one can quote the good words of Stanley B. James:

Self-realization in the narrow individualistic sense is mere ego-centrism. To be a person, and in fellowship therefore with all other persons, actual or potential, and to refuse enslavement by things or in any other way—is the real object of existence. Personality means freedom and charity and universality.

Though of French origin, Personalism has indeed the stamp of universality. What, then, has the *Personalist Manifesto* to say for itself? Well, in the first place, you will discover in it very little use of that distinction of more than dubious validity drawn between "individual" and "person"—a distinction which some unfortunately have taken to be central with Mounier's school. This dichotomy has received rough handling, e.g., by Martin D'Arcy in *The Mind and the Heart of Love*, pp. 169-171 (a truly profound book), and by Louis Mercier in the American quarterly, *Thought*, for June, 1944. I shall therefore devote no more time to it. For *The Personalist Mani-*

*festo*, for Personalism truly understood, it doesn't really matter. Quite contrary to the spirit of the book would it be to have it considered as a hard and fast set of ideas to which all personalists must rigidly subscribe. To bother unduly about one such minor idea, the distinction between "individual" and "person," would be a futile proceeding.

#### PRIMACY OF MAN

"We shall apply the term personalist," wrote Mounier in the first paragraph of his book, "to any civilization that affirms the primacy of the human person over material necessities and over the whole complex of implements man needs for the development of his person." Note the word "civilization." Personalism distinguishes itself from kindred movements by a certain broadness of its sweep.

We are witnessing the cave-in of a whole era of civilization, one born towards the end of the Middle Ages, consolidated and at the same time threatened by the industrial revolution—capitalistic in structure, liberal in theology, bourgeois in its ethics. We are taking part in the birth of a new civilization. . . Any program of action that does not attain to the dimensions of this historical problem is servile and empty work. . . . Our ultimate goal is patiently and cooperatively to remake the Renaissance after four centuries of errors.

A fourth part of *A Personalist Manifesto* is devoted to an all-out at-

tack on the modern world as the enemy of the person. Here the individualists, the bourgeois, rentiers, directors—plutocracy in general—are vituperated as forcefully as by any Fascist or Marxist.

On the altar of this sad world, there sits but one god, smiling and hideous: the Bourgeois. He is a man without love, a Christian without conscience, an unbeliever without passion. Comfort is to the bourgeois world what heroism was to the Renaissance and sanctity to medieval Christianity—the ultimate value, the ultimate motive for action . . .

Little by little (after the Middle Ages) there was set apart from human living a class of men bound to the labor of their hands and deprived of the dignity that derives from the mastery of one's work or from a conscious participation in a vast enterprise of human design. The workers, more permanently injured in their dignity than in their substance, became exiles from culture, from the freedoms of life, from the humble joy of labor, and (like genuine exiles) strangers to themselves.

From such a bourgeois, plutocratic regime, Mounier turns not unsympathetically towards Fascism, Nazism and Communism—tyrannies of the Right and the Left. They engage his sympathies, but no less earn his condemnation. From the viewpoint of personalist requirements, the basic incompatibilities of the Left and the Right disappear behind a common purpose which is the subjugation of the free spirit of man to an all-embracing temporal power, a novel and inverted theocracy. The State is divine: it is the super-Church conceded

ing no reality to persons or to groups except as parts of its own substance. Instead of bourgeois individualism and the worship of Mammon, behold collective man, pan-entheism, the worship of Power—extremes at least as undesirable. Yet there is (or was) in these tyrannies a spiritual élan, an ardor indicating a renewed acquisition of faith and of a meaning to life, especially in youth: a generosity of spirit, however badly oriented.

#### MARXISM IS MATERIALISTIC

Furthermore, in the case of Marxism, wherever it gets a hearing, it gains the confidence of the oppressed. It appears to deal with the immense and illusory riches of our time in a manner answering to their hopes and aspirations. Nevertheless, Marxism is basically materialistic, possessed by its possessions, possessed of the spirit of this world. For it there are no external truths, no values transcending here and now, no freedom for the person, no all-embracing love. An abundance of material goods, when and if acquired, will not long satisfy human nature. The void in man reappears when comfort can no longer be mistaken for happiness and the Marxist revolution for the Kingdom of God. Based on rationalism and 19th century scientism, Marxism has a deep contempt for the person, which it endeavors to condition by mass-produc-

tion methods and slogans. Over the spirit of man it wields a sort of Imperialism of the Collective. Therefore, like Fascism and Nazism, it bears no true solution for the impasse of our era. It is deficient in happiness.

A personalist civilization, on the other hand, would have its structure and spirit directed, not towards the accumulation of goods and profit and power, but towards the development of free persons, enabling them to exercise a maximum of initiative, responsibility, creativity and spiritual life. The person is an end not a means. It is something beyond consciousness and beyond time. "God Himself," says Mounier, "respects the liberty of the person, even while vivifying it from within. The whole theological mystery of free-will and original sin is based on the dignity of free choice conferred on man." Made in God's image, man is called upon to perfect that image by an ever-increasing participation in the supreme liberty of the children of God.

Of its institutional régimes, Personalism would require that they should avoid any fatal and permanent cleavage between the governing and the governed: that they should root out every form of oppression (of women by men, was one that Mounier especially saw in the France in which he lived): that they should surround the person with a degree of inde-

pendence and privacy, leaving room for action and choice: that they should not tamper with the person by means of social pressures, and, very importantly, that they should encourage all autonomous units to participate in a true decentralization of power. No higher authority should take to itself duties that can be properly discharged by a lower one.

### PERSONALISM IS UNIVERSAL

A pleasing feature of Personalism is its sense of the real presence of men. Existentialism is at best esoteric; Personalism is universal. It has an open heart and hand for every stranger, when what we have too often found even in the best of Frenchmen is a lamentable chauvinism, as though the world revolved about Paris. It deprecates not only the nationalism of the Germans, but that of all large States with their exaggerated notions of sovereignty, of omni-competence. It deprecates all racism. Just as within the nation its conception is for a pluralistic State, so internationally it looks to a federation of nations, a federalistic world—with disarmament, with no conscription, with the establishment of an international community, a juridical society of nations. Some of the original U.N. pronouncements (would that they were more than paper!) about fundamental human rights might have come straight from



Mounier, who, at least a decade before San Francisco, desired of international law that it should contain "a new formula for the protection of the person against the arbitrary action of States." The difficulty, of course, is not in drafting the formula but in enforcing it. As of old, so now. Mankind is in possession of every good principle: it fails only in their application.

Within the State, Personalism insists on a radical distinction between a personalist democracy and a liberal, parliamentary democracy. The latter is based on the postulate of popular sovereignty, founded on the myth of the will of the people. Its first theorists called upon the myth of the divine right of the people to counterbalance the myth of the divine right of kings. There was a time, not long ago either, when the historical process in British lands was looked upon as moving towards that happy consummation: one man, one vote, and all adults over the age of 21 enjoying the franchise. But, with the venality of the press, the diversity of national and international problems, the infrequency of polling days, the chicanery of party politics, the insufficiency attaching to all mechanical solutions—the unreality of vote-democracy has long been apparent. Its great virtue is that it enables the electorate to change its rulers periodically. Some words of G. H. D. Cole are apt for personalists:

In large political units what remains of democracy dissolves before the governmental machine. For democracy's essence lies less in choosing the deputy than in knowing him. Villages are for that reason more democratic places than cities, even when the squire and the parson direct the voting. Being democratic is not the same thing as professing advanced opinions or believing in democracy. Democracy begins in a man's knowing his neighbors as real people, and unless it begins there, it does not begin at all. . . .

#### ACTIVE DEMOCRACY

In a personalist democracy, men would participate in the governing of the State through their active participation daily, weekly, monthly in smaller groups—in factories, in unions, in parish affairs, in local councils. This brings us to industrial democracy, "gild socialism," "syndicalism." It has long been evident that men should not be mere cogs in industry, wage-slaves, hands. In industry there must be a primacy of welfare, not of profit, and in all work there should be, as far as possible, an appeal made to the workers' creativity and intelligence; workers should have responsibility in the running of their jobs and the possibility of change, advancement, progress. That is one point where an active and effective democracy can be exerted.

The pages dealing with Capitalism (whose Money God is more pernicious perhaps than even Communist



Atheism) are among the most drastic in *The Personalist Manifesto*.

A personalist economy will abolish the fecundity of money in all its forms; rejects fixed and perpetual interest on loans and stocks, eliminates every kind of speculation and reduces the role of stock and merchandise exchanges to one of regulation. It regulates credit collectively and takes away from banks and trusts the parasitic disposition of this credit. Money capital as such has no direct right over the product of the labor with which it collaborates. On this point it is necessary to distinguish between the capital invested by outsiders, who remain strangers to the enterprise, and personal capital, which participates both in the life of the enterprise through the labor of its possessor and in the risks. In the remuneration of this latter capital there is no question of a dividend, but of a title of co-ownership, which participates in the risks as well as in the benefits. . . . When the use of outside capital cannot be avoided, it has no right to a voice in the management or to the profit of the enterprise. The only right it can possibly have is to a small indemnity by reason of its immobilization.

Furthermore, p. 199: "Personalism affirms the primacy of labor over capital in the domain of economics." This primacy is based on four laws.

"1. Labor is a universal obligation. He who can work and does not, should not eat.

"2. Labor is not a commodity but a personal activity.

"3. The right to work is an inalienable right of the person. The most elementary form of ownership should be that of one's trade or craft, and society has the duty to ensure it for everyone, and under all circumstances.

"4. In regard to all aspects of economic life—profit, responsibility or authority—labor has an inalienable priority over capital. . . ."

From such important desiderata (is one deluded in seeing mankind on the whole moving nearer their realization now than when *Esprit* began two decades ago?), one turns to something even more central to Personalism: education, the culture of the Person, the education of the Person. Here Mounier, given occasionally to mouthing cotton wool,<sup>1</sup> is bright and incisive. All acknowledge the importance of education, but what a deadly-dull, prosy and platitudinous subject it is usually made! The fundamental personalist positions on education would seem to be these five:

I. The purpose of education is not to fashion the child into rigid conformity with any social environment,

<sup>1</sup> e.g., p. 3. "An action has value and efficacy only if it takes into account the significant truth of things and if it likewise considers the living historical situation which assigns to this action its proper place as well as its conditions of realization." Such sentences make almost as much sense when read backwards.

any craft, any class, any profession, or with any doctrine of the State.

II. The mission of the educator is to awaken, to inspire, to teach the child how to live, not merely to cram it full of scientific or practical facts.

III. How to live cannot be taught by impersonal instruction retailed in a codified series of truths. The student receiving truths needs to assimilate them personally, "to integrate them into a life aimed at values."

IV. While in the field of education the family has prerogative over the State, yet (p. 118):

It is not an arbitrary and unconditional right. This right is first of all subordinate to the good of the child and secondly to the good of the community. Nor can we ignore the fact that many, perhaps most, families are lamentably incompetent or indifferent in matters of education. Here the State has the double duty, together with the educative bodies, of protecting the person of the child and of providing for the common good. It pertains therefore to the State to maintain civil unity amid the spiritual differences of its members, and to provide for the common good by safeguarding the attainment by each member of a technical education sufficient for the fulfillment of his social tasks. . . . The members of every spiritual group have a right to all means necessary to educate their own children according to their own choice, that is, every such group that has a certain minimum of children to be educated and that is in agreement on a minimum of the fundamentals of a personalist society.

It would seem that under the

"pluralist school system" of the personalists State support for denominational schools would be forthcoming and justice done to them—such justice as they do not now receive, e.g., in Australia and the United States.

But (V), "There can be no case for the pluralist school unless every effort is made not only privately, but also by public institutions, to facilitate a feeling of fraternity among the different spiritual groups within the State."

Mounier, of course, has much more to say of education than this, and he treats also of Art, Family Life and modern technical inventions. The last he accepts unreservedly, though it is very likely that the machine has usurped functions it should never have usurped. The machine has been taken into social life haphazardly with no attention paid to right and wrong, to happiness in industry, to human welfare in general. Such considerations would seem to have been considered by Mounier a form of archaic arcadianism. It is not as simple as all that, but an intricate problem, largely unfaced.

### A WORTHY THINKER

I have spoken above of mouthing cotton wool. Although this is not a frequent fault with Mounier, it does point to one defect, namely, that as a manifesto the book with which I have been dealing chiefly—however finely written for the most part,

written with fine thought and feeling and a compelling sincerity of soul—is far too long. A manifesto should be brief, resounding, defiant. It should be the trumpet blast that blows down the rotten walls of Jericho. But Mounier rather seeks patiently to argue, convince, convert. He is more at home in solid documents than manifestoes. What Mounier says of the French family system, what he wrote when his imagination was fired to portray the many perfections of the non-existent personalist State to be, et cetera—such things belonged by rights to other books.

Nevertheless, *Personalist Manifesto* remains an engaging book. Mounier, with his Hope, his Faith and his Charity, was a worthy thinker laboring for the establishment of God's

Kingdom on earth. Hope gave him a certain prophetic power, as when, having subordinated duly the economic to the political, the political to the human, he went on to proclaim that "History will undoubtedly designate anti-capitalism as the happy characteristic of the third decade of our century. . . . The person is not a closed garden in which civilized man takes shelter from machine civilization, but a spiritual principle that will animate all civilization and raise it to its own level."

It is indeed heartening that the rebel does not always possess the wider vision. Amid the "barbarians whom the most recent civilization has produced," the visionary Mounier lived. Would that he might prove a new St. Benedict to a more gracious age.



### ***Christianity: Individual and Social***

The religion of Jesus is the religion of a community. Christ unites into a single body the scattered children of God; He gathers the multitude from the races and nations into the unity of the new people of God. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit brings together in the unity of faith the innumerable diversity of tongues and of peoples. Baptism and the Eucharist are sacraments of unity: "One body and one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism." But Christianity is also an essentially personal religion; it not only does justice to every need of the person: it fully satisfies and lays open all the spiritual aspirations of the soul. More profoundly still, it is a personal engagement, the engagement of a person to a person, "my Savior Jesus." The Christian, according to Paul and Ignatius, desires "to find Christ and to be found in Him."—*Thomas Camelot, O.P. in the CROSS AND CROWN, Sept., 1950.*

## Those "Mild" Marxists

*Reprinted from THE LABOR LEADER\**

**A**MONG the more obvious phenomena observable in the labor movement is the toleration and the understanding which the materialistic-minded business unionist exhibits on so many occasions for the followers of Karl Marx. The notable exception at the moment, of course, are the untouchables, the Communists, but there was a time in the not too distant past when the toleration embraced them as well.

The average business unionist has in all probability never read a book—or even a pamphlet—on Marx's theories, on the score that it's all crackpotism anyway and doesn't warrant the time. He feels that enough ideas on Marxism, Communist variety, can be absorbed by a casual reading of the newspapers—enough, that is, to enable him to denounce them loudly as the need arises. He knows little about the other varieties.

When a business unionist meets a non-Communist "parlor-pink" Marxist, he recognizes almost instantly a kindred soul, particularly if the latter keeps his political coloring to himself. Both appreciate power and understand that ruthlessness is often a prerequisite to leadership in this ad-

mitedly imperfect world. Given a power-hungry individual, democracy can be quickly stripped of its spirit and its essence, leaving but a set of meaningless rituals which but mock the ideal.

What the business unionist isn't aware of is the existence of a tacit agreement among the more "acceptable" brands of Marxists that their people must be strategically employed wherever and whenever possible. Preferably this would be in important policy-making or administrative posts—especially those in which one can influence personnel selection. This informal "pushing" takes place within and without the labor movement. It is particularly noticeable in Government labor circles.

To outside observers the long-range possibilities of this policy of infiltration into various Government labor departments, both Federal and State, are hard to assess. It is difficult to believe that it could ever seriously affect national economic or political policy.

However, it must be remembered that an organized minority occupying key spots can wield influence far beyond its numbers. In these days

\* 226 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y., December 31, 1956.

of highly centralized government the will of the people can be evaded or flouted with little fear of serious repercussions, reversals, or reprisals of any kind.

The immediate results of the "mild-Marxist" infiltration are more easily seen. America is overwhelmingly represented today in countries receiving Marshall aid by "mild-Marxists" functioning as labor aides, State department labor advisors and labor information press agents.

No one questions their right to accept Marx's teachings in whole or part; that is their privilege. But we cannot ignore this basic fact—that the rank and file of American labor is non-Marxist in its convictions. It is difficult for us as believers in democracy to reconcile that belief with the teachings of Marx. How much more disconcerting it must be for the

European unionist who finds that the labor representative of free, democratic and idealistic America has close political links with the Marxist parties of Europe—parties which have historically been undemocratic and intolerant of those who differed with them politically.

Even a business unionist might be preferred in the role of representative as the lesser of two evils.

And what a great shock all this would be to the rank and file of American unionists were they fully conversant with the facts. These happenings once again point up the necessity for more informed, more politically sophisticated union memberships. They underline, too, the old saying that constant vigilance is still the price we must pay—and pay every day—if we are to retain our freedoms.



### *Charity by Proxy*

Christ made the test of discipleship the measure of our charity for the poor, the orphan, the aged and the unfortunate victims of sin and injustice. In loving God by loving our neighbor, we cannot act, therefore, as a board of directors acts—by the method of proxy. We cannot turn over to some neighbor, or some charity worker, our duty of loving our neighbor, of considering his welfare as our own, of ministering to his needs of soul or of body. When we come to the end of our brief life on earth and meet our Blessed Lord on His judgment throne, our hope for a favorable decision will greatly depend on whether or not Christ will say: "When I was hungry, *you* gave Me to eat; when I was sick, *you* visited Me; and when I was in prison, *you* came to Me." It will not suffice to say you sent a check and then forgot all about the case, leaving it to some priest or social worker to act as your proxy.—*Most Rev. William J. Hafey at the annual Catholic Charities Dinner, Hazleton, Pa., Oct. 23, 1950.*

# The Welfare State

FRIEDRICH BAERWALD

*Reprinted from THOUGHT\**

**A**MONG the many meaningless slogans which plague and confuse modern political society, the "Welfare State" continues as a favorite topic for public oratory. Apparently it is a fascinating subject, whether you are for or against it. On April 24, 1950, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota, addressing the National Conference of Social Work in Atlantic City, said:

To provide financial assistance for welfare programs has always been a part of America's tradition. I issue the challenge tonight that it is an American tradition which even the opponents of the welfare state want to preserve. The only question which remains an issue is the question of "whose welfare."<sup>1</sup>

On April 27, 1950, Edwin S. Friendly, President of the American Newspaper Publishing Association, speaking to the sixty-fourth annual convention of that group, urged the publishers to use

... honest reporting and editorial reason as an all-powerful weapon to alert the public to the evils of government by directive, the welfare state, subsidies to everyone, communism disguised as

democratic socialism, all the threats to the principles Americans hold dear.<sup>2</sup> These two statements make clear only one thing—that the "Welfare State" means many things to many people and that it has become a word symbol expressing either boundless confidence in the ability of the state to supply ever-larger benefits to more and more people, or, on the other extreme, summarizing the disgust and contempt for recent social developments that remain strong in certain circles. These contradictory attitudes can be joined together on a deeper level of analysis as symptoms of a relapse into political immaturity and a withdrawal from social reality through the setting up of false issues. The real danger indicated by the word-combination, "Welfare State," is its ambiguity. This prevents a rational debate of the underlying facts. Thus we may easily lose the road to necessary solutions in the fog of emotional generalizations.

It is therefore necessary to retrace our steps, and to rediscover the social situation behind the slogan of the "Welfare State." Unless we regain the proper perspective of the issues involved, we will not be able

<sup>1</sup> *New York Times*, April 25, 1950.

<sup>2</sup> *New York Times*, April 28, 1950.

\* Fordham University, New York 58, N. Y., September, 1950.

to evaluate properly the facts behind the words. We shall therefore outline the changes in the property order, in the employment status and the age structure of the population which underlie the prevailing sense of insecurity in contemporary society and the demand for more and more "welfare" legislation. We shall also analyze the economic conditions necessary for a successful operation of welfare schemes. Finally we shall show that while modern society must continue to develop techniques and institutions to offset the loss of individual economic security, the "welfare" thus provided is no great embellishment of the waste lands of mass society in our age of advanced technology.

#### INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

There can be no doubt that private ownership of land or of means of production yielding a more or less steady income is the best basis of economic security. If there were in existence today a property order in which the majority of the labor force could retain the self-employed status of those working on their own land or in their own shops or businesses, there would be no clamor for "social security," and the welfare activities

of private and state agencies could be limited to the small but ever-present marginal group of individuals in distress. Such widely dispersed private property is certainly one of the main characteristics of a social order as outlined in the great Labor Encyclicals. *Rerum Novarum* as well as *Quadragesimo Anno*<sup>3</sup> stress that the wage of the worker should be ample enough to make saving meaningful by eventually enabling him to acquire some property, especially in land. This thrift could lead to an increase in their property "that they may bear by wise management . . . the burdens of family life with greater ease and security. . . ."

But while the Popes proclaim this optimum solution of the problem of social security, they are keenly aware of the fact that actual trends in modern society move in the opposite direction. Leo XIII spoke of "the unnumbered masses of non-owning workers"<sup>4</sup> in 1891. Forty years later Pius XI, while recognizing that the condition of workers had improved, especially in the more advanced industrial countries, again emphasized the fact that modern society is characterized by an "immense multitude of non-owning workers."<sup>5</sup>

In fact, lack of ownership of income-producing assets has spread far

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Rerum Novarum*, ed. NCWC, paragraphs 65, 66; also, *Quadragesimo Anno*, ed. NCWC, paragraphs 61 and 74.

<sup>4</sup> *Rerum Novarum*, paragraph 6.

<sup>5</sup> *Quadragesimo Anno*, paragraph 60.



beyond the groups usually referred to as "workers." In many European countries, inflationary developments and high rates of taxation played havoc with the savings and resources of the middle classes even after World War I. World War II destroyed what had been left of the economic basis of these classes in Europe, so that today the "middle classes" represent an attitude, a state of mind, a set of memories and customs rather than an economic reality in that vital part of the world.

But we are concerned primarily with the social situation in the United States and its effect on the economic security of the vast majority in this country. The American people have been spared to a great extent the economic upheaval which has devastated the social scene in so many other parts of the world. While they have most generously assumed the economic burden of rehabilitation through the Marshall Plan and the preceding loans and relief organizations, it cannot be denied that with the exception of certain newly underprivileged white-collar and professional groups they are far better off today than they were before World War II. This applies to the large groups of farmers, individual business proprietors, factory workers, business managers, lawyers and doctors. Spending for consumer goods and housing has remained very high in the five years following the end

of hostilities. At the same time the amount of savings in the hands of individuals has continued to be very considerable. In short, the economic condition of the American people as a whole must be considered at least satisfactory. Certainly it is not critical.

In the light of these facts, the demand for social security and other economic policies associated with the word complex, "Welfare State," seems almost paradoxical. Why should people experience this feeling of insecurity and this urge for protection at a time when their real income is still at a peak and their standards of living have risen to a new high of ownership of homes, automobiles, refrigerators, washing machines, radios and television sets?

#### THE TRANSFORMATION OF PROPERTY

But the explanation of this striking contradiction between material prosperity and social anxiety is simple. The great strides in the standards of living and the clearly discernible evidence of constant improvements in the "American way of life" have done nothing to bring the people of this country closer to that type of economic security which is founded on income-producing individual ownership of land or business. The United States is, indeed, the land of property-owners. But the property that is owned by the vast majority of the people, far from being income-pro-



ducing, is in fact income-consuming. The constant expansion of the catalogue of things considered indispensable for the "average" American family, their unceasing exposure to high-pressure advertising, the identification of success with the accumulation of more and more material goods, has put a large number of people into a situation where they are never "paid up" with regard to their homes, automobiles and other expensive articles in daily use. Now this state of affairs is not dangerous or undesirable from the viewpoint of keeping the economy expanding and operating at a high level of activity. But, on the other hand, it shows that for most people property represents an accumulation of goods not yet paid for and committing large slices of present and future income. For most people property is no longer an economic asset yielding current or future income.

The main reason for this current national prosperity without individual property is the economic status of the majority of gainfully occupied Americans. Of the 52 million people engaged in manufacture, trade, transportation, finance and government, about 45 million are wage and salary earners. This leaves only 7 million business proprietors who own their own enterprises, derive a revenue from it and are able at least in theory to draw an income from business after their retirement. But even these owners of individual free enterprises

live largely in an atmosphere of uncertainty. Their economic position is far more vulnerable on the whole than that of impersonal corporations. The annual mortality rate of small business units is far higher than it is for larger incorporated firms.

### SUBSIDIZED FARMING

The other significant group of individual owners of income-producing property are the farmers. But no one can say that they have operated in recent times according to the pure principles of self-reliance. On the contrary, they have demanded and received large-scale economic support by the government. There is no need to discuss here the merit of one such scheme over another. It is sufficient to state that by and large agriculture has become a subsidized economic activity and is likely to continue in this condition in order to prevent the collapse of many smaller farm holdings and their replacement by comparatively few large-scale agricultural enterprises taking full advantage of the economies of scientific and mechanized farming.

Thus we cannot escape the conclusion that modern industrial society with its tendency toward mechanization, rational scientific management and large-scale operations in huge combinations has brought about a deep change in the social function of private ownership. While private property has remained intact as a

basic legal institution in all non-communistic modern societies, it has nevertheless shifted in its meaning to individuals from the area of producer goods to the sphere of personal use and consumption. To an increasing extent the private property order does not transmit revenue directly to individuals. It generates goods and services and their equivalent in money, which is then turned over in part as salaries and wages to employes and workers, who comprise the overwhelming majority of the labor force. Income is not any longer received primarily under the property titles of rent, interest, dividends or entrepreneurial withdrawals; it comes to individuals under the contractual titles of wages and salaries, which are valid only as long as a particular employment relationship can be maintained.

The ever declining significance of private property as a direct source of income for the vast majority of individuals involved in the modern industrial situation can be demonstrated easily by a study of the proportion of wages and salaries to total personal income payments. Already in 1929, 59.1 per cent of the income receipts of individuals in this country were in the form of wages and salaries. In the twenty years that have passed, there has been a slow but steady rise in the relative share of income received from employment as compared to revenues derived directly from

property. In 1949, 63.5 per cent of the income payments were wages and salaries. Six per cent were "transfers," such as disbursements to veterans, to claimants and beneficiaries of social security and clients of welfare agencies. This leaves 30.5 per cent of income payments which can be said to derive directly from property titles, such as individually owned farms and businesses and also dividends, interest, rent and royalties. However, it should be noted that this item does not include the net income of corporations remaining at the end of a business year after disbursement of dividends. These undistributed profits of corporations have exceeded now for several years the dividends paid out to individual stockholders by very substantial amounts. In 1948, they had risen to over 13 billion dollars. These large accumulated funds now running into the tens of billions represent property income of business enterprises which is not being translated into income of individuals because these surpluses are calculated after all other payments, including bonuses to executives, have been accounted for.

Thus we see that not only has property income declined steadily in our modern economy but also that a significant proportion of it never reaches the individual but is being retained by impersonal units of free enterprise. In absolute figures, the property income actually paid out in 1949

came to \$64.5 billion. In a population of about 150 million people there was obviously not much of this income to go around on a per capita basis. It would have amounted only to about \$430 per person. Of course these are calculations in the realm of abstract statistics. But they serve to make clear how far modern economic society has moved away from an order of property which would provide to the vast majority of people a basis of social security through individual ownership of revenue-producing assets.

At the same time, this analysis shows that the problem can hardly be solved, at least in the foreseeable future which has practical meaning for people now living, by wishful thinking about "redistribution" of wealth or property, about "deconcentration" or an extension of profit-sharing. We have to face the fact that a major part of the income received in modern society derives from employment and not from ownership. This fundamental change in the social function of private property explains the prevalence of a sense of insecurity in the midst of prosperity. But there are other basic developments contributing to this problem.

#### PHYSICAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE

The rise of the issue of the welfare state coincides with an ever increas-

ing measure of physical security of the human person in terms of life expectancy. One of the outstanding characteristics of modern society is the continuous reduction of the infant and maternity death rates and the lengthening of the life span of elderly people. American society in particular has become disease-conscious and is witnessing almost on a year-round basis highly publicized drives to combat cancer, heart ailments, infantile paralysis and a variety of contagious diseases. But these improvements in health standards have moved ahead much faster than our social arrangements to deal with this situation. An ever increasing number of people can look forward to reaching the age of sixty-five in perfect health but in very poor economic shape.

As the property order has disappeared as the primary foundation of individual revenue, the proportion of people in the age-group of sixty-five and over has reached an all-time high of 7.7 per cent of the population. According to estimates this group will be 13.2 per cent within the next fifty years.<sup>6</sup> At the present time only about 20 per cent of this old-age group is financially independent. This percentage is bound to drop even further as the number of people in this category increases. This problem is unprecedented in human expe-

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Warren Moscow, *New York Times*, April 17, 1950.

rience. It cannot be brushed aside by campaign slogans such as the "give-away" and "poor-house" state.

As long as most individuals were closely identified with the property order and as long as the life expectancy was short, there was hardly a problem of old-age insecurity. This was true especially wherever families were consumer as well as producer units centered around farms, handicraft shops and small businesses. Peasant civilization had established various patterns of providing for the old. In some cultures farmers would hand over the homestead to the eldest son at a comparatively early age, sometimes upon the latter's marriage. A formal contract would assign a certain room in the farmhouse to the parents and stipulate, often in great detail, the mutual rights and duties. In the extended patriarchal family, found especially in Oriental countries, in which even the grown-up sons remain subject to parental authority and where the old generation retains economic control over the land, there is no old-age security problem.

### FORCED RETIREMENT

Now it is obvious that this type of economic security is outside the reach of the ever increasing proportion of people thrown into an employment situation. They can at no time in their lives gain an entrance into the shrinking world of substantial

revenue-producing ownership. While justified objections can be raised against a mechanical enforcement of a retirement age, especially when it is being fixed at sixty-five, it is necessary to be realistic about this aspect of the question. Even while this country was enjoying the blessings of full employment after World War II, it became more evident each year that the labor market showed increasing resistance to the absorption of the annual crop of graduates. This pressure on employment opportunities on the part of the younger generation is bound to translate itself into an even greater insistence that people of sixty-five and over should withdraw from the labor force.

This situation is aggravated by the difficulties that the younger generation has in providing support for their retired parents. They also derive their income from employment. As young people get married, acquire a home and an automobile and start raising a family, they are committing their present and mostly their future income for these purposes. At the same time the "homes" now being built, already too small for a family of a healthy size, do not provide any longer for the traditional spare room which could be made available to the older generation. Furthermore, the modern tendency toward all-purpose living, cooking and dining areas in "mid-century American homes," with its liquidation of privacy and its

establishment of utterly collectivistic patterns of existence, has made the problem of the living together of two generations under one roof far more difficult psychologically and practically than it was in the more spacious homes of a bygone day.

We cannot escape the conclusion that modern society has so far not solved the contradiction created by the tremendous strides toward greater physical health on one side and the changing role of property on the other. Just as through the increases in the life expectancy of people the need for continued income of the old age group has risen, the sources of such income are drying up. The seriousness of this condition can be easily seen from current statistics. In January, 1950, 2,750,000 people were receiving old-age assistance, an increase in numbers of 9.4 per cent within one single year. These recipients represented 23.9 per cent of all people sixty-five years and over in the United States. At the same time 1,308,000 people of this age group received primary benefits under the Old Age and Survivors insurance system.<sup>7</sup>

It must be clearly understood that these 23.9 per cent of the population

over sixty-five years had to undergo a rigid means test in order to establish their eligibility for old-age assistance. This system with all its improvements and refinements of the techniques of modern social case work is the direct descendant of the poor relief of former ages. It retains these features because it is not based on contributions of the applicants. It is supported by general taxation on a "pay-as-you-go" method. Nothing is more revealing of the confusion created by the word "welfare state" than the fact that proposals to put old-age security on a self-supporting basis, to sever its ties with poor relief and to make it a contributory system could be denounced as moves to transform the American Government into a give-away state. The precise opposite is true.

But the problem of security cannot be solved by setting up a comprehensive system of social insurance and then relying on its ability to operate, as it were, automatically. The best contractual or legal arrangements to provide old-age protection and other schemes of social security are bound to collapse if production and income decline and the economic system loses its ability to expand or maintain a

<sup>7</sup> It would not be correct to add the figures for recipients of old-age assistance and of old-age benefits in order to arrive at a total of old people receiving payments from the "Welfare State," because there are, at present, many "double counts" in these statistics. Owing to the very low rates that prevailed until now in Old Age and Survivors insurance, many "beneficiaries" had to turn to welfare departments for supplementary old-age assistance. The improvement of the Social Security Act is likely in the long run to shift more and more people from old-age assistance to old-age insurance.

high level of activity. It is therefore necessary to discuss at least in outline the economic requirements of an effective social-security system.

### THE ECONOMICS OF SOCIAL SECURITY

In the preceding discussion, we have dealt only with the vast area of insecurity created by the lengthening of the life span and the change in the property order. Social security problems also arise, however, from unemployment, loss of income as the result of sickness or accident and permanent disability before the age of sixty-five. To meet these needs, advocates of an expanded social-security system demand the setting up of comprehensive social-insurance schemes and liberalization and improvement of those already in existence. The recent debates about the welfare state have ignored almost completely the economic characteristics of social insurance. The opponents fail to mention that the system is financed by the contributions of those likely to benefit at one time or another from the various insurance schemes; the proponents have overstressed the payments promised and have been too vague on the incidence of cost. This propaganda on both sides has beclouded one of the basic facts of social insurance; it is a scheme which is financially self-supporting, at least as far as its major plans are concerned. It does not rely on deficit

spending or on general taxation. It "gives away" only what has been previously received and accumulated in the form of contributions. That is to say, in the day-to-day operations of the scheme, a comparatively small fraction of the income payments are withheld, deposited in the various trust funds of the social-security plans and transferred in part to those currently claiming benefit payments.

These benefits, far from being financed through borrowing, are an exchange of income between those engaged in gainful employment at any given moment and those not so engaged because of old age, unemployment, poor health or accidents. For this reason it is also not a plan which would compel, as has been said frequently, the more intelligent and responsible members of the communities to support the idleness of those unwilling to work. It is strange indeed that such arguments could be advanced again after the experience of the Great Depression has demonstrated to all that economic reverses and unemployment can strike regardless of personal skill and effort.

Social insurance is financed by contributions from current income which are either stored in trust funds or transferred to beneficiaries. These contributions are a cost of the national economy. The benefits are a component part of total income payments. That is to say, social-insurance schemes effect a transfer within the

stream of the national income. It would be erroneous to consider these costs as additional burdens and these benefits as income which would not occur in another form if there were no social-insurance system. In the absence of such schemes, society would still be obliged to care for the poor, the old and the sick through general taxation. It is doubtful whether this would result in substantial savings because social-welfare administration with its case methods and the need of frequent investigations and checks is far more complex than social-insurance administration. Another advantage of a social-insurance system is that it does not require annual appropriations from Congress. The proponents of "pay-as-you-go" schemes of social security, not based on approximate actuarial principles but financed from current general taxes, would throw the welfare issue into every budget debate and into every Congressional and Presidential election.

#### STRENGTHEN INSURANCE FEATURES OF LEGISLATION

Here, the irrationality of the opposition to social insurance as a means to provide social security is most apparent. If the current confusion about the welfare state prevents the completion of a really sound contributory social-security system in this country, all those running for elective office will be exposed to ever

increasing pressure from old-age and other lobbies. They will be forced to promise higher and higher non-contributory benefits in order to outbid the opponents and to be elected. In view of the fact that the proportion of the old-age group is constantly increasing, it should be easy to see the urgent need for removing the old-age security issue from politics by further strengthening the insurance features of American social-security legislation.

This emphasis on Federal legislation to meet the increasing demand for social security may appear to some as advocacy of "statism." This notion is based on a misconception of the operation of social-security systems. Prior to the introduction of social insurance, the needy had recourse only to welfare departments and agencies, they had to accept whatever conditions were imposed upon them in order to receive grants. A budget was set up for them and the continuation of these payments was at all times dependent on the compliance with the rules of the welfare agency. Inevitably this type of welfare work represents the strongest possible "interference" with the life of individuals. As long as relief was concerned only with those who could not help themselves because unusual misfortunes, poor health and similar causes had reduced them to destitution, this kind of highly individualized case work was necessary. It will



remain so for those marginal people who somehow cannot make the grade in our modern highly competitive society.

But social insurance, especially old-age benefits, will deal increasingly with millions of people who differ completely from the traditional clients of welfare agencies. To deny them an effective old-age insurance system would indeed mean the setting up of an ever expanding "welfare-department state." The more social insurance we are able to create in this country, the further do we move away from such an unpleasant development.<sup>8</sup>

#### PRIVATE PENSIONS

There are, however, some who believe that it would be better to solve the problem of security outside government, especially by private pension schemes. Such plans have been incorporated recently into many collective labor agreements, especially in mining and in the steel and the automobile industries. This development indicates great progress in the social climate of our industrial society. Workers participating in such company schemes are more likely to

experience a sense of belonging and to feel that they have a permanent stake in the firm that employs them. However, it is necessary to see clearly the drawbacks and limitations of such private pension schemes.

These plans are bound to tie down workers to a particular company, to discourage individual efforts for economic advancement through the search for better jobs with another employer and to increase the already existing rigidities in the labor market. Furthermore, such plans are a particularly heavy burden for smaller enterprises, whose "break-even point" is higher than that of large companies, which are in a better position to lower costs through continuous investments in labor- and material-saving equipment. This will become apparent the moment business activities recede even temporarily from their present high level. The inability of smaller business units to meet their fixed costs as the volume of transactions declines may lead to further concentration in very large companies, which are better able to withstand a drop in activity.

These considerations are not intended as an argument against com-

<sup>8</sup> There is, however, justified concern among private welfare agencies about attempts of the Federal Government to regiment their activities and policies, especially in the field of child-welfare work. This issue has been created by the attempt of Federal agencies to use additional allocations as a lever to deprive the private agencies of their autonomy. A solution must be found enabling private agencies to continue policies representing their social philosophy while assuring their further operations through appropriate grants. However, this problem is not at the center of the current general debate on the welfare state.



pany pensions as such. They merely emphasize the economic limitations of these private plans. Hence, the best solution seems to be a mixed system of old-age insurance in which the basic minimum needs are met by contributions and benefits under the Social Security Act while private pensions would assume a supplementary character enabling people to receive in their old age a total income somewhat above a mere subsistence level through this combination of public and private insurance. But even this does not provide the final solution of the problem of old-age security through social insurance. It is necessary to investigate further the economic conditions required to make such a system work.

We have shown above that social-security benefits are transfer payments within the over-all national income. These disbursements are bound to rise for many decades to come because more and more people will become eligible with higher and higher wage credits entitling them to fairly large benefits. Now, it is easy to see that this whole system can be thrown out of balance by a sharp decline in the value of the gross national product and in income payments. Such a development would reduce sharply the annual receipts of social insurance without interrupting in the least the rising trend of benefit payments. Soon the point would be reached when the gap between current re-

ceipts and expenditures would have to be covered by outright appropriations from the government. This condition would arise precisely at the time when tax revenues begin to fall off sharply as a result of a declining business. That is to say, the shortage in the social-security system would have to be made up by "deficit spending." But the use of this highly over-rated device of a "countercyclical" policy for social-security benefit payments would be most undesirable. It could have no "pump-priming" effect because it would merely enable the continuation of payments which were already part of the national income before expenditures began to exceed contributions.

The preceding discussion has shown that the social-security problem is only part of a much larger issue of our modern economic system. Unless we succeed in maintaining a vigorously growing economy with rising levels of output, employment and income, there simply will be no social security and no "welfare" in the years to come. The ability of the system to maintain the momentum of growth is the prerequisite of real social security. Thus a new problem seems to arise: does social insurance interfere with the power of economic expansion? This question lies at the bottom of some of the uneasiness about the "welfare state." Undoubtedly, the social-security system adds to the fixed costs of all enterprises.

An argument could be made that these costs lower profits and reduce thereby the incentives for additional investment. If this were the case, the social-security system would in the long run defeat its own purposes by slowing down the rate of growth and leading to a stagnant economy which would be unable to maintain social insurance.

This is a serious aspect of the economics of social security but it cannot be removed by denouncing the welfare state. We have to face the fact that in the first half of this century the fixed costs of the American economy have risen sharply. Two world wars and one major depression have brought about a tremendous increase in public debt charges, in payments to veterans and national defense. This has led to a large increase of the governmental overhead cost of the American economy. Between 1929 and 1949, all government expenditures, Federal, State and local, have risen from 10 per cent of the gross national product to about 20 per cent. These high costs of living in a twentieth century torn by "hot" and "cold" wars are reflected in high taxes on individual and corporate incomes which siphon off the stream of private income large funds which are turned over to government and spent back into the economy by government. Within this framework, the costs of a comprehensive social-insurance system are negligible. If we

were to discontinue this system tomorrow, we would create social disorganization without in the least changing the fact that we are operating a system with high fixed costs. In fact, the final social cost of not having an effective social-security system would be far higher than the immediate dollar cost of having it.

Thus, in our time the problem of economic expansion cannot be approached in a wishful way by demanding the cancellation of fixed costs which are irreducible as a result of the political and social transformations of our time; it must be faced with the full knowledge that economic growth must proceed from the current plateau of the national income and its cost components. The prospects of our social-security system depend largely on the outlook for economic expansion. We shall briefly examine this problem as it appears at this halfway mark of the century.

#### SOURCES OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS

"Economic maturity" is a concept which has been buried, not once but many times, by economists, including the Council of Economic Advisers. Even at the time when it claimed some respectability, it had been the source of much confusion. In the late 1930's, economists began to see a relation between growth patterns of the population and the long-run trend in values and activities which had been overlooked almost completely by the

neo-Classical school. Some thought that the apparent inability of the economic system to pull itself out of the depression could be explained at least in part by the slowing down of the increase in population.

It is no longer necessary to continue the discussion along these lines because the last decade has witnessed a reversal of this downward trend which cannot be attributed only to the usual postwar increase in birth rates. The prewar estimates of an approaching maximum population and a subsequent leveling off and decline in numbers are no longer valid. This new pattern of population growth ought to put a solid floor under the economic structure. It will prevent a sharp decline in land values. The demand for new housing and for the expansion of services of all kinds, including educational and recreational facilities, will continue to assert itself if we succeed in preventing a drastic fall in the current money level of national income payments. A careful combination of private and public building projects can succeed in continuing the current high level of building activity for a long period.

Another source of economic growth lies in the area of "under-developed" countries. For years to come they will need heavy equipment for the establishment of power plants, the extension of transportation systems and modern agricultural implements. A bold plan for long-range

development along these lines could establish a pattern of cooperation between the fully developed American economy and some of these backward areas which would permit the former to maintain high levels of activity and the latter to make rapid progress toward better use of resources and higher standards of living.

But it must be clearly understood that this type of economic growth will not continue of itself. It can proceed only within the framework of a clearly defined economic policy which has been formulated in full awareness of the need to establish the general conditions for economic progress. Such a policy must also take into account some factors which can offset the growth potential of the American economy unless this danger is recognized now.

#### NEW ECONOMIC ASPECT

The much-talked-about post-World War II depression failed to materialize in the five years following V-J Day. It is not surprising that these forecasts proved to be wrong. They were based on the false assumption that the cycle pattern of the nineteenth century would be stronger than the impact of modern war in all its economic aspects. Furthermore, they overlooked the fact that the legislative innovations of the last twenty years and the greater prudence shown by management have made a repetition of a "crash," such as occurred

in 1929, most unlikely. It is necessary to stress this new aspect of the economic situation so that we may not be caught looking in the wrong direction when a new type of economic danger begins to assume definite shape and to put the brakes on economic growth, which, as we have seen, is the prerequisite for the effective operations of security schemes. This new danger is already clearly discernible. Briefly, it consists of two trends operating simultaneously and apt to interact in a manner most dangerous to economic development.

The first of these trends is the outlook for a steady net gain in the American labor force which requires an annual expansion of employment by about one million jobs. The second trend is the continuous rise in productivity, roughly estimated at about 3 per cent per year. To dramatize this picture, we may visualize what might happen in a ten-year period in which we would continue to maintain the current high levels of production and income; despite this "full employment" on the 1950 plateau, there would be about 12 million unemployed. On the other hand, the ability of the employed labor force to produce goods and services would be 30 per cent higher than it is today. But the dead weight of unemployment would prevent a full utilization of facilities. We would be faced with the specter of economic paralysis.

If that should occur, the social se-

curity system would collapse of its own weight because it would no longer be supported by the firm foundations of a progressing economic system. This dilemma cannot be avoided by the negative policy of curtailing social-security and welfare programs; it must be met by affirmative economic action.

It is a paradox of modern economic development that the very factors which considered in themselves could guarantee greater prosperity for more people—a growing labor force and rising productivity—can actually bring about unemployment and stagnation. The optimistic view that these problems will always work themselves out in the "long run" is just as fallacious as the defeatist attitude that nothing can be done about this ominous development. Unless something is done about it, all talk about increasing social security and welfare will prove to be futile. Fortunately, what can be done about it is now clear, at least in outline.

### BALANCED ECONOMY

In order to maintain the growth pattern of our advanced technological economy, it is necessary to retain at all times a balance between rising productivity and the real disposable income of consumers. The latter must be kept high enough to take off the market the increasing output made possible by the greater productivity of the system. If this income is per-

mitted to fall behind, the increasing productivity of the system will not be translated into corresponding levels of higher output. There will be unused industrial capacity on the one side and chronic unemployment on the other.

It must be clearly understood that no social-security system and no welfare policy can function adequately under conditions of chronic unemployment. The key to social security is, therefore, an employment policy which succeeds in preventing such an unfavorable development of the labor market. If it succeeds, even an ambitious social-security system is feasible. If it fails, social-security legislation will not prevent the widespread destitution characteristic of depressions.

### WAGES AND PRODUCTIVITY

But there is no need to be afraid of such developments. Recent significant developments in American industry have shown a way out. Fundamentally it is very simple. It consists

of an agreement between labor and management to increase at given intervals, mostly each year, the basic wage rates by an amount estimated to represent the average annual rise in productivity of the industry.<sup>9</sup> Once such a flexible wage system has been adopted on a large scale, it can be hoped that the income of wage and salary earners will remain consistent with the progressive technological pattern of our economic system. In this way productivity gains will be translated into additional purchasing power. This will prevent large-scale technological unemployment.<sup>10</sup>

Thus we see that one of the main sources of economic progress is an economic policy proceeding in full awareness of the potentialities and pitfalls of our advanced economic system. Such a policy cannot be formulated within the antiquated framework of concepts of private capitalism or state socialism. The growth potential of the economy will fail to respond to these obsolete concepts. Traditional capitalism would

<sup>9</sup> The five-year contract concluded between the UAW and the General Motors Corporation in May, 1950, provides for a guaranteed annual wage increase of 4¢ per hour as a reward for increased productivity. This will raise the basic wage rate 16¢ per hour for the duration of the contract without the need for further bargaining. It will be put into effect regardless of a possible decline in consumers prices. This contingency is taken care of in a special "escalator" clause incorporated in the same contract.

<sup>10</sup> The adjustment of income payments to an estimated annual gain in productivity is no cure-all. In order to be effective, there must be a high degree of stability in the price system. The main difference between this new technique and the old approach is that the latter relied exclusively upon the hope that rising productivity would bring about lower cost and prices. This proved to be unfounded. Hence the shift to an increase in money wages in proportion to a rise in productivity. Cf. Davis and Hitch, in *Review of Economics and Statistics*, December, 1949.

lead inevitably to technology running wild, wages lagging behind and chronic unemployment setting in. State socialism would slow down the rise in productivity and create an imbalance between the needs of a rising population and the yields of economic activity. In each case, the economic foundation of social security would be weakened to the point where the system would become ineffective, if not inoperative. What is required today is the setting up of targets of income and production to be achieved jointly by management and labor with the active cooperation of government agencies supplying basic economic information and guidance without interfering with actual economic operations. Such a system may not be satisfactory to the ideological purists but it would have a chance to provide a good measure of prosperity and security.

#### THE WELFARE STATE REVISITED

The optimistic conclusions of the preceding section should not mislead us into believing that the new type of security that is obtainable under modern conditions is superior or preferable to older social arrangements. We have seen that the economic basis for security founded on property has changed almost beyond recognition. It will not be coaxed back into existence by orations for or against the welfare state. The tremendous ability of an advanced

system to produce goods and services will make enough available to people in the older age groups to permit them to go on living on a level of material comfort unheard of even a short while ago.

But the question remains whether a refrigerator and a television set can replace in the minds of the people the sense of achievement and of function which was conveyed by proprietary forms of economic activity. Private property, apart from being an asset, links the present to the past and the future. It makes for continuity and social stability. The welfare state can supply "welfare" only on the most elementary material level and that only, as we have seen, if we succeed in maintaining full employment. It is no remedy for the major problems of living in our technological age. The welfare state is no antidote for spiritual impoverishment; it does not remove political insecurity; it cannot prevent people from feeling lost in a hostile economic setting. The real danger implied in the trend toward a "welfare state" is the possibility that more and more people will lower their sights, looking forward only to security for themselves on a narrow scale, indifferent to what happens to the world outside and to their inner life and resources. This danger cannot be met on the level of economic policy. It is a problem of welfare far transcending a materialistic concept of the welfare state.

# Justice for Poland

WILLIAM GREEN

*President, American Federation of Labor*

*An address broadcast on the Freedom for Poland radio series,  
November 22, 1950.*

**I**T IS now completely clear that there can be no justice for Poland as long as it is kept behind the Iron Curtain.

In all the long history of oppression of the Polish people during the bitter years of occupation by the Russian czars and the German emperors, never were they so enslaved, never were they so cut off from the free world as they are today under the smothering dictatorship of Communism.

I am thoroughly convinced that the people of Poland, in whom the spirit of freedom and liberty has always burned brightly, cannot and will not submit indefinitely to the rule of their Communist oppressors. I am confident that whenever the opportunity presents itself, the Polish people will throw off the yoke of dictatorship and again seek the freedom and independence which is their right and their ultimate destiny.

Of course, right now there is very little the people of Poland can do to regain their freedom except to keep their hopes alive, and to maintain their moral and spiritual integrity against the onslaughts of Communist

propaganda. Especially is this true of the younger generations who are compelled to attend schools where they are indoctrinated with Communist teachings which sneer at religion, make a mockery of human freedom and glorify Soviet criminality.

In fact the only chance the imprisoned people of Poland have of learning the truth is from outside broadcasts, which they are forbidden to listen to, and from letters they receive from friends and relatives who have escaped from the Iron Curtain and are now living in exile in America and in the free nations of Europe.

It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the exiled citizens of Poland never give up fighting for freedom for their beloved land and give encouragement to their countrymen at home to keep their faith and to hope for eventual justice.

According to information received by the American Federation of Labor on conditions within Poland today, information that comes to us from secret but reliable sources, Polish workers are indeed enslaved to the Soviet war machine.



In the past, the American Federation of Labor had many opportunities to meet with and to work with the representatives of free Polish workers at international meetings for the advancement of labor standards and living standards throughout the world. We were deeply impressed on every occasion by the progressive policies and liberal viewpoint of organized labor in Poland. But today those leaders have been killed, imprisoned, or forced into exile, first by the Nazi invaders and then by the Russian oppressors who succeeded Hitler as the rulers of Poland.

#### **NO FREE TRADE UNIONS FOR POLISH WORKERS**

As a result, Polish workers today have no free organization to represent their interests. They are compelled to work at jobs assigned to them by the puppet Communist government, at wages fixed for them by that government, and they have no voice in determining their own working conditions.

Of course, the Communists brazenly declaim that under their regime the workers are the masters. They even require the workers to belong to unions. But it should be emphasized that Communist unions are not free trade-unions. They are not unions freely chosen by the workers to represent them. The unions are imposed upon the workers by the Communist regime. Instead of defending

the rights of the workers, the unions are used to police the workers and to enforce harsh discipline on any individuals who do not live up to the prescribed conditions.

A simple illustration of the effects of such perverted unionism can be found in comparing the workday in Poland with the standard prevailing in this country. In America the law says that workers cannot be required to work more than eight hours a day unless overtime is paid. In Poland, the law makes them work at least eight hours a day before they can be paid at all. The emphasis, you see, is completely reversed. Working conditions under Communist rule are just the opposite to what they are in a free land. Free workers, represented by free unions, decide for themselves the conditions of employment they will accept. But enslaved workers, herded into Communist unions, are told what conditions they must conform to under threat of heavy penalties for violation.

Those penalties are so dreadful that I hesitate to describe them. We have received detailed information on the forced-labor camps maintained by the Communists. Millions of captive human beings, whose only sin is unwillingness to bow down to Communist dictatorship, are consigned to those camps, where the most brutal conditions prevail. The unfortunates who occupy the forced-labor camps rarely live long. They are killed off

by hunger, by cruel punishments and by sheer overwork.

The workers who manage to satisfy their masters and escape being sent to slave-labor camps have little to show for their hard work. Wages are pitifully low and living standards far below what the free world regards as decent; nor is the production of Polish workers being used to rebuild Poland or to strengthen its national economy. Most of the manufactured goods and farm products are siphoned off by the Communist dictatorship for use by Soviet Russia's war machine in its mad quest for world conquest.

Today even those nations which once were duped or intimidated into accepting Communist propaganda at face value now realize how counterfeited it is. By fomenting war while preaching peace for others, the Communists have exposed the cruel purpose behind their hypocritical mask. The whole free world is uniting against them.

Therein lies the greatest hope for the advent of justice to Poland. The Communist dictatorship cannot survive without constant transfusions of new wealth and new production gained from military conquest. As

the free nations of the world unite to resist Communist aggression, the prospects of additional acquisitions to the Soviet orbit by revolution or military intervention become nullified.

In my opinion the Communist regime, if forced to rely upon its own production, wrung from unwilling workers, is bound to crumble and fall apart before too long. The defection of Yugoslavia from the Soviet Union is a portent of what will happen in the future. When the time comes, the people of Poland, too, must be ready to liberate themselves from the Moscow noose.

Today Stalin is still able to suppress justice for Poland by sheer power. But the Polish people will never be converted into substituting communism for their faith in God. They believe, as they always have believed, in a God of justice, a God of mercy, an everlasting God who tramples the tyrants of a moment into the dust.

The free men and women of America and their compatriots in exile are praying today with the oppressed people of Poland that God, in His wisdom, will soon help them to overturn the tyrants and regain justice.



There are no neat little diagrams or formulae for measuring the success or failure of a human life. By contrast one man's failure may be another man's success. How great the struggle, how great the love of God, God alone knows.—*From TODAY, February, 1951.*

# Atheism and Anti-Theism

REV. JAMES McLAUGHLIN, C.C., PH.D.

Reprinted from THE IRISH ECCLESIASTICAL RECORD\*

SOMETIMES one encounters a book which deserves more than passing mention, not alone because of its intrinsic merits, but, also, because of the problems it suggests and the light it throws on movements that agitate the modern world. Such a work is *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*,<sup>1</sup> by Father de Lubac, which appeared in an English dress last year and has a special significance for those who would evaluate the root evils of our time.

Father de Lubac's is one of those books which are at once provocative and disturbing. It is a disturbing thing to find that philosophical errors, which we complacently dismissed with a syllogism in our college days, have not tamely accepted their dismissal and still pursue a potent course.

The late Dr. Coffey was wont to warn us against judging the stature of a thinker like Hegel by the curt treatment accorded to him in our Philosophy manuals. It is all too easy to under-estimate the influence of a mind whose system seems absurd, judged by our principles. Unfortu-

nately, a philosophy does not need to be true in order to be powerful. It does not even need to be popular in order to influence world trends. A philosophical theory may be as complex as that of Hegel, as "caviar to the general" as that of Croce, but the lofty thinking of philosophers has a way of working down and expressing itself in the not-so-rarefied activities of people at a lower level. Revolutions are not, as a rule, immediately launched from a philosopher's study; they are usually born of more concrete causes than philosophical thought, but the influence of an abstract thinker can reach the men of action and mould new orders once revolution has come. It follows, then, that, while the "any fool can see that" attitude may silence the parish-pump atheist, knowledge and study are needed before we confront the forces that strive for world domination to-day.

Again, a work like *The Drama of Atheist Humanism* has a certain importance in bringing home to us the existence and significance of thought

<sup>1</sup> *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*. Henri de Lubac, S.J. Translated by Edith M. Riley. Pp. + 253. Sheed and Ward. Price 15s.

\* 41 & 42 Nassau St., Dublin, Eire, July, 1950.

currents, which, though they may only indirectly affect us, help to constitute the environment in which our brethren on the Continent must battle for truth. And, in a day when, more than ever before, it is true that "no man is an island," this appreciation is needed if we are to eschew intellectual isolation and, with informed minds, give effective service in the conflict of our time.

Finally, a book like this is important because of the author's approach to his subject and the lessons it conveys. Father de Lubac is eminently competent to give this guidance, as his previously published work on Proudhon, as well as his contributions to the Continental reviews, shows. With him there is no scoring of cheap debating points, none of the facile dismissal born of impatience. Understanding and sympathy precede analysis, and criticism is always tempered by charity, which seeks reasons for what is condemned and gives credit for the element of truth which has been distorted into error. Wherever possible, Father de Lubac allows his subjects to speak for themselves, linking up quotations with explanatory commentary and concluding with brief, direct criticism.

In *The Drama of Atheist Humanism* the author takes three thinkers, very opposed in many ways, but all protagonists of a certain fundamental attitude to man's life and destiny and all exercising a considerable influ-

ence on modern thought. The three figures analysed are Feuerbach, Nietzsche and Comte. What all three have in common is the conviction that God is dead, that theism has fulfilled its office in human evolution and can now be disregarded. With this goes the belief that mere negative atheism has also had its day, that there is no room now for the nostalgic rejection of an Arnold or the fatalistic gloom of a Housman. Something positive must be given men in place of the rejected God, and this something must be humanity itself under various guises. To this true deity a true allegiance must be given, and from this allegiance a robust, virile attitude to life must develop, with new values and a new religion which, though of this world, will fully express man's nature and aspirations.

#### FEUERBACH'S MATERIALISM

Feuerbach is of importance, not only in himself, but in being the link between the two more significant figures of Hegel and Marx, the latter of whom he influenced to a marked degree. Through him, the philosophy of Hegel, stripped of much of its idealism, but retaining its method, reached Marx and found expression in the dialectic of Communism. To Feuerbach, religion was something which could be explained altogether in psychological terms, something of past value which had outlived its utility. It came into being through

man's non-recognition of his own divinity, through a certain "alienation" whereby man dispossesses himself of attributes and values belonging essentially to his nature and objectifies these in a myth, a product of the imagination, which he calls God. But in the working out of the Hegelian synthesis, this "alienation" is coming to an end, with the recognition that the only god of man is man himself. Herein lies the new and true object of worship, the human essence, not as inherent in the isolated individual, but as embodied in the community.

How closely all this is associated with the doctrine elaborated by Marx need not be stressed. Engels, the collaborator of Marx, said that the latter transformed the atheist humanism of Feuerbach into practical Communism and it is true that Communism is no more than Feuerbach in the order of social action. Feuerbach realized the social implications of his teaching, but Marx made them explicit. Of course, in the disciple we find much modification and criticism of the master. Marx criticized Feuerbach for ignoring the social factor in his explanation of the origin of religion, and insisted that the "alienation" of which Feuerbach spoke was expressed, not only in religion, but in its ally, private property. Religion compensated not only for a lack of consciousness of the divinity in man, but also for the privations of life. Thus it was a weapon by which the

strong kept the weak in their place. Feuerbach had said, in expounding his materialism, "man is what he eats." Marx gave the saying a significance far beyond the intention of its author. Marx accepted the divinization of man as proclaimed by Feuerbach, but he replaced abstract humanity by its more concrete embodiment in the State. Yet, all these modifications do not affect the real dependence of Marx and Engels on Feuerbach; they but emphasize that on the threshold of the Marxian paradise is the purgatory of Feuerbach.

#### NIETZSCHE

It is interesting to note that with the inspirer of Marxism Father de Lubac couples Nietzsche, for, in popular thought, the relation is far from clear. Yet it does exist, not alone because of the influence of Feuerbach's writings on the young Nietzsche but because of their common acceptance of certain fundamental tenets of atheistic humanism. And we know that the totalitarian political philosophy which expresses Nietzsche has much in common with the philosophy of Communism. It is also noteworthy that Father de Lubac takes Nietzsche very, very seriously as a powerful influence in the formation of the Europe we know. And rightly so. The fact that Nietzsche's message was terrifying and that his later days were overcast by the grim cloud of insanity has made many of us reluctant to

concede him importance. Yet, when all is said and done, Nietzsche, for all his violence and fanaticism, developed atheistic humanism to its logical doctrinal conclusion, just as his disciples developed it in its political expression. It may be that much in Nietzsche was not new. But Belloc has said of Rousseau that his power lay as much in his style as in his ideas, and the violence and amazing vigor of Nietzsche's expression accorded so well with, and appealed so much to, the temper of his time and country that it added to the real power of his thought.

Nietzsche did not deem it worth while to fight against God, Whose death he proclaimed. His assault was reserved for Christian ethics, which were, he hissed, "a capital crime against life." The so-called Christian virtues were really vices and, as such, stood in the way of the evolution of the superman, who, standing above good and evil, represented the goal of Nietzschean hope. What Nietzsche would put in the place of the Theistic God was different, then, from the idol of Feuerbach. He was not interested in humanity in general. His superman would come into being by the elimination or suppression of the weaker members of the race. Nietzsche disagreed with Marx, for he held that religion was a weapon by which the weaker deprived the strong of their rights. In the grim but, to him, beautiful order which Nietzsche visu-

alized, there would be no rights at all for those outside the superman category. And, just as there were no limits to what this being of the future would attain, so the concept of him engendered a scathing contempt for the ordinary individual, a scorn which found directive expression in the words of the disciple, Rilke, "Be hard, be ruthless, be cruel."

Europe has witnessed the practical expression of this doctrine. And we are not done with it yet. Nietzsche stands today, in all his ruthless realism, as a challenge to our time, as he was to his own. And he is more than a challenge: he is something of a prophet too. "I herald the coming," he said, "of a tragic era. We must be prepared for a long succession of demolitions, devastations and upheavals." "There will be wars such as the world has never yet seen. . . . Then all the earth will writhe in convulsions."

### COMTE'S POSITIVISM

Father de Lubac devotes a great deal of attention to Comte, the pontiff of Positivism; too much, we might be inclined to think, for, surely, no man less likeable, more vain, or so demonstrably silly in many theories, ever posed as a world teacher. Yet, Father de Lubac sees in his doctrine a certain underlying agreement with the greater figures he analyses. Comte, too, was full of lip-tribute to the religion he would relegate to obscurity. He put forward a religion of humanity and

"common sense." Yet this humanity was not the same as the generic concept of Feuerbach. It had more in common with the superman of Nietzsche. It comprises individuals of all generations but it excludes all those who have not "made themselves fit for assimilation" by living in conformity with the Positivist scheme. How close this can also come to the Marxian glorification of the proletariat as worked out in practice can also be noticed. Indeed, there is agreement of terminology here, for Comte spoke of a dictatorship of eminent proletarians, to be exercised for a generation. We hasten to add that this was a very different dictatorship from that of Marx, for Comte would give scant respect to the "vast majority of workers" and would ensure the happiness and dignity of the workman by "developing the preponderance of the employers."

The Positivism of Comte cannot be adequately summarized. It can be made appear ridiculous by a philosophical critic, but underlying what is absurd in it, is a certain logic and coherence which makes no negligible expression of atheistic humanism. And Father de Lubac, far from agreeing that Positivism is not a formidable menace, asserts:

To my mind it is, on the contrary, one of the most dangerous that beset us. At any moment, the failure of other nostrums with greater outward attractions may suddenly send its stock up. Many of the present campaigns

against individualism already derive their inspiration from the ideas of Comte and his disciples, too often at the cost of the human person.

#### KIERKEGAARD AND DOSTOIEVSKY

But, in this drama of atheistic humanism, the Christian view of man was not without its defenders. Father de Lubac devotes the latter part of his book to two of these. And, at first sight, his selection seems peculiar, for, surely, within the Christian fold of the nineteenth century were voices more authentic and definite than those of Kierkegaard, the Danish Lutheran, and Dostoevsky, the Russian Orthodox, men who were not philosophers in any traditional sense. The teaching of Kierkegaard, moreover, has to be disentangled from autobiographical writing, that of Dostoevsky from his novels, and the process of disentanglement is not easy. Especially is this true of Dostoevsky, a singularly complex character himself, who spoke through fictional characters who more than shared their author's complexity.

Yet, there is much to be said for the choice. Two modern men who felt within themselves, with torturing intensity, the same urge of conflicting forces and ideals which agitated Feuerbach and Nietzsche have arrived at a very different answer to life's problem. Taking the modern approach of existentialism, they have appealed to life rather than to ab-



abstract reasoning and found the same solution which the perennial philosophy supplied long ago. Hence, they are well fitted to represent a trend in Christian humanism today and it is all to the good that literature was their medium of expression, for it is through literature that philosophy can make potent contact with life.

Of the two protagonists of Christian humanism, Kierkegaard is probably the more important because of the existentialist trend in modern philosophy. It is a pity that he is not treated of at more length in Father de Lubac's book. *The Drama of Atheist Humanism* presupposes much knowledge of the thinkers under analysis, and, if we except a work like Father D'Arcy's *Mind and Heart of Love*, there are few books by Catholic writers in English which take account of the Danish philosopher. Nor are the works of foreign authors on the subject generally available, though this defect may now be remedied by the publication of an English version of the *Introduction to Kierkegaard*, by Professor Jolivet of the Catholic University of Lyons.

Briefly, Kierkegaard rejected the impersonal and purely intellectual dialectic of the Hegelian school. In stead of proceeding from the idea to its concrete manifestations, he would reverse the process. As a moral individual face to face with God, Kierkegaard was acutely conscious of the problem faced by Augustine, the

problem of the "anguished heart," what he called "disquiet," the tensions and contradictions of the soul. These were his starting-point and from them, without formulating a finished system of philosophy, he gave the world, in works like *Fear and Trembling* and *Postscript*, stimulation which has powerfully influenced later thought. Unfortunately, most of those to whom he communicated his aversion for purely abstract thinking, and whom he taught to put the emphasis on existence rather than on essence, have not followed him in seeing that the disquiet of man finds explanation and satisfaction only in the source where Augustine found it long ago.

Father de Lubac asserts emphatically that Kierkegaard was not a subjectivist, that, in fact, he is the "theologian of objectivity," but his preoccupation with the relation of the individual to Christian reality and his lack of contact with the true rationalism to be found in Scholasticism make him a "stimulating writer rather than a safe one." Today Catholic writers like Marcel attempt to reconcile the "concrete thought-process" of Kierkegaard and his school with our Thomistic inheritance, and Father de Lubac seems to have a good deal of sympathy for such an ambition. But caution is needed here as well as sympathy and the danger of subjectivism can only be avoided, we suggest, by a rigid regard for the sign-

posts which Scholasticism, at its best, provides.

Much of this is also true in regard to Dostoievsky, to whom Father de Lubac devotes what many of us would regard as a disproportionate amount of space. What he has to say of the Russian novelist is most interesting though, as in the case of all novelists "with a message," we may often wonder whether more is not read into the text than the author himself would have intended. However, from studies like that of the Grand Inquisitor, there does emerge ground for the conclusion: "He made clear in his novels that man cannot organize the world for himself without God, without God he can only organize the world against man. Exclusive humanism is inhuman humanism."

And this, we can say, is the main conclusion to be derived from Father de Lubac's book and it is a conclusion which contemporary history abundantly illustrates. The study of atheistic humanism shows that man cannot live in a religious vacuum. A god he must have to replace the rejected God of Theism. Hence, mere negative atheism cannot even make a pretence of satisfying man's essential needs. So those who hate Christianity must provide a religion to take its place. And, in the world Feuerbach and Nietzsche ushered into being, they make humanism that religion, and humanity, either in the shape of

generic man or the State or the proletariat, the new idol. But the persistent pursuit and glorification of this abstract deity leads in every case to the suppression of individual man, to the denial of everything that personality implies.

This means that any traditional conception of right must be discarded.

The individual, as Father de Lubac points out, while acknowledging that he had no rights against God, his Creator and Conserver, felt that he had definite rights against society, which he transcended by origin and end. But, if temporal society is the only true deity or a manifestation of that deity, how can the individual have any rights against it? And, *de facto*, wherever the natural alliance of atheistic humanism and Totalitarianism is formed, the rights of individual men are trampled upon that a nebulous abstraction may be glorified to the profit of the "supermen" who have secured dominance.

#### EFFECTIVE ANSWER TO ATHEISTIC HUMANISM

One other thing is stressed by Father de Lubac. We have spoken of the spirit of fairness which characterizes his writing. That spirit is shown when he urges the advantage of studying our "most blasphemous adversaries." For these, he suggests, may "advance criticisms whose justice we are bound to admit." They

can show us the distinction between Christianity and Christianity as lived by many Christians. And it is in the living of Christianity in all its stern demands that he sees the only effective answer to atheistic humanism. Speaking of what primarily should be the endeavor of those among modern men who are believers, he says: "May

they show themselves more at pains to live by the mystery than eager to defend its formulas or impose the hard outer crust of it; and the world, impelled by its instinct to live, will follow in their footsteps."

For all who think, Father de Lubac's book is one to be read and considered.



### *Social Writings of the Pope*

There are indeed two conflicting elements in the main movement of the last hundred and fifty years, a movement which has settled down into what is now called democracy by the Anglo-Saxons.

One element comes from the inherited ideas of Christendom. It consists of the Christian conception of man as a creature of God, endowed with mind and will, and free, though weakened by sin, to adhere to God. The other element belongs to the eighteenth century and is based on quite a different idea of man. God does not come into the picture. Man the individual possesses within himself all the powers to achieve happiness, and it is only by accident or folly that he has been prevented from exercising his liberty and creating an ideal world. This view, based on the innocence and goodness of man, has no doubt of the value of unrestricted liberty, and it goes by the name of liberalism.

At a first glance these two elements or ideas might seem to be identical, as in fact the immediate reforms they aim at may well look the same. But in their ultimate ends they are totally different. It would have been well if in the last hundred years this difference had been better recognized, as the welfare of society would not have been so jeopardized. The extreme libertarian doctrine was responsible for the slums and the conditions of injustice so often imposed on workers. The theory that liberty of action was bound by social and economic laws to spell progress and happiness, played into the hands of the avaricious and led to the extreme form of capitalism which was bound to produce class warfare. But the alternative proposal of complete equality of all, under a Government which represents the best interests of all and expresses their conscience, falls under the same condemnation of a false philosophy of man. The Social Encyclicals were intended both to set forth the true doctrine of society and to offer a general program of social and political reform. The principles and advice contained in them could hardly have been more opportune or more needed.—*Martin D'Arcy, S.J. in UNITAS, July, 1950.*

## Editorials

### **Education and Democracy**

**T**HERE is a direct connection between the totalitarian threat hanging over Western civilization like the sword of Damocles and the educational crisis fermenting in the western world. The battle in the schools, like that in the world, is between the forces of materialism and those of religion. The most tragic note is that religious-minded persons are in many instances being used by the materialistic, anti-religious forces.

The American Association of School Administrators meeting in Atlantic City this week went on record as opposing health and welfare services for children in religious schools. Under their resolution, even tax exemption of religious schools is condemned.

In California religious schools must pay taxes, and those hostile to religion and religious schools are quietly working to extend that policy to other States on the "wall of separation between Church and State" theory. The purpose is to cripple religious and other schools and to give the State a monopoly in education, the first objective of the totalitarians wherever they seize power.

Too many leaders in public educa-

tion give the impression that they are more interested in penalizing religious than in aiding public schools. That is not only a grave disservice to the nation and Western civilization but to the cause of the public school, whose teachers and facilities need every possible friend in order to secure for them the increased financial support they require. We trust that religious-minded persons in the field of public education will be able to impress this fact on them.—THE CATHOLIC NEWS, New York, N. Y., Feb. 24, 1951.

### **Archbishop Fisher and the Vatican**

**T**HE habit of "straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel" is one to which many people have been prone in every age, no less than the Pharisees who were denounced for it by our Saviour. It is disappointing, however, to find so good a Christian as the present Archbishop of Canterbury slipping into it, as he very obviously does in his recent address to Convocation, unless his Grace has been grossly misreported.

In this utterance he apparently made a general charge that the Vati-

can had failed to "ally itself with other Christian bodies in the cause of freedom." There are many who would be inclined to suggest that "the boot was on the other leg," in view of the readiness with which certain non-Catholic Christians have dissociated themselves with the cause of such leaders as Cardinal Mindszenty in Hungary, and Archbishop Stepinac of Yugoslavia, whose persecutor is now the recipient of lavish western aid and flattery. In any case, we would point out in all courtesy that the main battlefield where Christian liberty is being defended is in East Europe today: and that it is hardly fitting for the chief bishop of a church which is not engaged there to rebuke those who are enduring the full blast of persecution with *failing the common cause!*

He passes on to accuse the "Roman Catholic authorities" of permitting and even encouraging the use of "political compulsion" in their own favor against other Christian organizations. The reference, one presumes, is principally to Spain, where the minute Protestant bodies—amounting to a few thousands in a population of twenty-eight millions—are permitted the right of private worship, but not of public propaganda among the Catholic population. Whether the policy of the Spanish Government is prudent in existing circumstances is a matter upon which there may be differences of opinion. The fact remains

that the small groups concerned have conducted their propagandist activities, in the past, in a fashion highly insulting and calumnious towards the Christian Church of Spain, and that many of their members were the allies, during the civil war, of savage atheist persecutors, and enemies of the present regime. In the circumstances, it seems a trifle fantastic that so mild and reasonable a restriction should be the subject of a solemn protest—more especially when we consider the complete absence of any official Anglican condemnation when Spanish bishops and priests and nuns were being massacred by the Republicans, often with every circumstance of atrocity, and a Satanic fury of arson, outrage and nameless sacrilege was being loosed against Catholicism.

Those who were silent then about mountains of anti-Catholic terror might more fittingly refrain from drawing attention, today, to the all but imperceptible molehill of Franco's "police compulsion" against Protestant propaganda.

Finally, Dr. Fisher once again criticizes the decision of the Papacy to define the doctrine of the Assumption, which was believed by St. Augustine of Hippo, as well as by the saint who founded the See of Canterbury, and the Pope who sent him to England. We regret that he "cannot understand" why this should be thought desirable; but there is no

reason why the development of the revealed truth of which the Catholic Church is the guardian should conform to the views of those who do not accept her authority, or standards of orthodoxy. Our desire for a "common front" in defense of the spiritual truths which all Christians hold against militant atheism and secularism does not imply that we intend to compromise in any way upon truths we hold which are denied by others or held to be "open questions"; nor does it signify any retreat, on our part, from the Holy See's unique claim to teach all mankind in the Name of God, with the authority of the Holy Spirit, as the living voice of Divine Truth.

If his Grace and his fellow Christians will stand by us in the battle with evil, their support will be very welcome: but if they insist on terms of alliance which are contrary to our basic principles, we must fight on alone—God helping us—against their enemies and ours. Fortunately, there are others nearer the main battle-front—like the Lutheran Bishop Dibelius of Berlin—who have shown a somewhat different spirit in this hour of crisis. They are ready to collaborate on terms which combine the joint assertion of truths and values held in common, with a recognition of differences which must still remain insurmountable, though they need be no barrier to mutual charity. With all respect, we commend the German

Bishop's example to his Grace, in full confidence that having made his protest, he will see the necessity, after all, of supporting fully the stand of the "great Church" against the common enemies of religion.—*THE ADVOCATE, Melbourne, Australia, Sept. 21, 1950.*

### *Covering Crime News*

**I**N SUGGESTING that the Catholic press broaden the scope of its news coverage to include crime news, the Brooklyn district attorney touched a subject long discussed in Catholic journalistic circles. The fact that the Catholic press by its nature stands uncompromisingly opposed to crime of all kinds—moral as well as statutory, economic as well as social—need not be labored. Yet it is true that the Catholic press, except for editorial comment seldom directed at individual cases or particular situations, is silent. There is no coverage of crime stories, and little comment in the average Catholic publication.

The reason certainly is not that the Catholic press either is indifferent to crime or under the delusion that conditions are improving. The reason rather is a mechanical matter which cannot be solved without a complete reorganization. For example, there is only one Catholic daily in the country which is printed in English, and that daily is barely staying alive, despite the fact that its lay staff live

in voluntary poverty. The impossibility of operating a Catholic daily on a diocesan basis would seem quite clear.

Since Catholic papers do not publish daily, there is little opportunity to follow up running stories. As a result they can handle on an occasional basis only parts of the news. Weekly papers do not compete with daily papers as dailies compete with one another.

This paper is superior to the daily in that what it prints is official, not the opinion of writers who work for a paper with one policy today and a paper with a different policy tomorrow. Also, this paper, like other Catholic papers, prints Catholic news which cannot be obtained anywhere else, and it omits news that does not have authoritative backing. In virtually all crime stories, there is an element of speculation in which Catholic papers cannot indulge. That secular papers often speculate is evident from frequent examples of inaccurate handling of news.

To be specific, daily papers in this State have carried an item which probably is true, namely, that the Friars of the Atonement will locate in Cumberland. This paper at the moment has even more information, but it cannot be published until certain details have been arranged in New York. When this paper does publish the story, it will be complete

and accurate; every reader can depend on what appears. As recently as this morning, a spokesman for the superior of the Order had fault to find with speculation in the daily press.

In other ways, too, Catholic papers are limited. They cover only those organizations with official Catholic status or individuals representing the Church. Large Catholic membership does not make secular clubs objects of coverage, for under such a policy there would be little room for thoroughly Catholic and official news. The Catholic press of the status of the *Visitor* is the official publication of the diocese. It provides complete coverage of Catholic news, provides information on official attitudes, and offers comments with official approval. In other words it is the Catholic voice of the diocese.

Even if Catholic papers do not cover crime and corruption, they are even more opposed to both than others, for with Catholics crime and corruption are sin. If Catholic papers could afford to be larger, or if they could publish daily, then covering crime stories would be desirable. Under the circumstances, however, the Catholic press must be content to stand for right against all that is, in general, economically, politically and criminally wrong.—THE PROVIDENCE VISITOR, *Providence, R. I., March 1, 1951.*



## Documentation

### The Role of Family Saving

POPE PIUS XII

*An allocation delivered by His Holiness on December 3, 1950 to employees of the Savings Bank of Rome and a mixed group of workers and employers.*

**W**E ARE especially happy today to have the occasion to express to all of you—directors and employes of the Savings Bank of Rome—the great esteem we have for your institution, which, guided by a concept of true Christian charity and born under the auspices of our venerable predecessor, Gregory XVI, has faithfully maintained its wonderful traditions.

The goal which it sets for itself, and which it has pursued with admirable constancy for more than a century, is eminently social and, as a consequence, worthy of great praise. That goal is to enable people of very modest incomes slowly to increase their small savings and make them productive. In itself, that is a valuable service. It is seen to be still more valuable, however, when we reflect that this encouragement to thrift strengthens and stimulates the disposition to provide for the future, and spreads this practice and habit of mind among the least favored in society.

Indeed, the habit and practice of thrift has a still wider significance. In effect, it favors and develops a healthy climate for an ordered and virtuously courageous life. For courage is without doubt necessary—in every age but never more than in our own—to resist perseveringly the thousand temptations to pleasure and joy and comfort and self love which, even though falling short of a debilitating luxury, leave one with a disposition to do only what is strictly necessary. Certainly, in present circumstances, the amount of money which a large number of people are able to save is small enough. Nevertheless, those are not rare exceptions who, within the narrow margin between what is absolutely necessary and what is barely superfluous, manage to save, penny by penny, and confide to you what they have been able to put aside—very modest sums, it is true, but by no means negligible.

Who can doubt that such a manner of life notably contributes to maintain in a family a spirit of unity and a spirit of joy, amid a serene simplicity and moral dignity? Not at all desirous of searching outside for costly diversions, which leave behind only a bitter taste, father, mother and children know how to find healthy satisfactions among themselves, in their own home or in the restricted circle of their friends. Such a home, where every evening each one has a keen desire to be, after the work and fatigue

and troubles of the day, is loved, and all the members of the family take care of it as a sanctuary, and each one, according to his special aptitude and his personal capacity, strives to embellish it and make order and joy reign within. In the intimacy of such a household, industrious and frugal, they exchange news of the small happenings of the day. To others these tidbits of news would seem of no value, but not there where, instead of squandering time, money and peace of soul among strangers, each one interests himself in the welfare of the others.

There is still more. You know how, by informed and prudent administration, to find a productive use for the modest capital of your depositors, not only to their private advantage, but also to the profit of undertakings which promote the public well being, in which your clients become useful, if anonymous, collaborators, contributing in this way to the social and material reconstruction of their country.

Congratulating you, then, on the good you do, through your bank, to one of the most deserving classes in society, We give you, your clients and your families, with all our heart, our paternal apostolic benediction.



## Social Function of Banking

POPE PIUS XII

*An allocution of His Holiness to a group of directors and employes of the Bank of Italy, April 25, 1950.*

**W**E are especially pleased today to see assembled here the directors and employes of the Bank of Italy. Your gathering assumes a special character, dear sons and daughters, because it takes place in the light of the Holy Year. That thought ought to give more force and efficacy to the resolutions which Our Lord has inspired in your souls during the retreat which you have just finished in preparation for Easter. You will be strengthened still more if you consider your work, not in a purely materialistic sense, but according to its true dignity and profound worth.

For the Christian, professional work is a manner of serving God. For others, it cannot but be a burden which a man seeks to avoid so far as possible,

or else an end in itself, an idol of which a man makes himself the slave. But that is not for you.

Even if, with the passing years, professional work should become monotonous, or if, by obedience to the law of God, it should weigh on one like a restrictive and too heavy load, it will always remain nonetheless for you, Christians, one of the most important means of sanctification, one of the most efficacious ways of conforming yourselves to the Divine Will, and thus of meriting heaven.

A Christian cannot consider his work in any other way. If there is today so much discontent, so much indifference and irresponsibility, that is because a clear and true concept of the

Christian value of work no longer exists, or, if it does exist, is no longer a living force in souls.

A man's work ought to give to him and his family a sufficiency of daily bread. That sufficiency is not something which is added in a sort of extrinsic fashion; it is intrinsically connected with professional work according to the designs of God. Is it possible to imagine a more powerful stimulus to a just organization of our daily lives than this Christian conception of work?

Besides, one's work ought to contribute to the common good; it should testify to the sense of responsibility of each for the well-being of all.

#### GOOD OF ALL

Who is able to ignore this aspect of work in an institution such as the Bank of Italy? Conscientiousness, honesty, exactitude—these qualities of all good work are the more inseparable from work when it is considered as the service of God, and become, in this way, profitable for the welfare of the community.

How is it that an organization such as yours is a real community, and not a mere existence in common, unless it is that all of you, from the first to the last, are conscious of working with a Christian loyalty for the good of all?

Do not be surprised, dear children, if we insist on the social aspect of your profession, since this consideration ought to lead you to esteem and love it, and to practise it assiduously and conscientiously.

In the Holy Gospels, the Divine Master does not condemn justly acquired riches. He praises or reproves the conduct, good or bad, of man in their regard. Woe to him who makes himself a slave to riches, for it is not pos-

sible to serve two masters. Woe to him who, deceived by riches, suffocates in his heart the seed of the Divine word. Woe to him who gives himself to riches without taking care of the account of them he must render to God. Woe to the bad rich man who lived only for pleasure, without a glance of pity at poor Lazarus who, covered with sores, languished at the gate. Yes, woe to all those. But praise and reward for the good and faithful servant who made fruitful the money he received; while on the contrary, blame and punishment for the lazy servant who hid his master's money in the earth, instead of confiding it to bankers and receiving a return on it.

Does not the social function of the bank consist in making it possible for the individual to render his money fruitful, even if only in a small degree, instead of dissipating it, or leaving it sleep without any profit, either to himself or to others?

That is why the services which a bank can render are so numerous: to facilitate and encourage savings; to preserve savings for the future, at the same time rendering them productive in the present; to enable savings to share in useful enterprises which could not be launched without them; to make as simple and easy as possible the regulation of accounts, exchanges, commerce between the State and private organisms and, in a word, the entire economic life of the people; to establish in some sort a mechanism which helps to surmount difficult times without running into a catastrophe.

These are only some examples among others. But are they not already pregnant with a powerful motivation both for the directors, upon whose shoulders weigh, especially in a period of crisis,

the grave responsibility of making decisions, and for the employes, whose work demands a rigorous attention which no distraction should interrupt?

The work of a man who lives in sanctifying grace ought to manifest the characteristics of that of a child of God. It should be a source of daily supernatural energy and daily merit for heaven and the great designs of the kingdom of God. In this way, the work-day of a true Christian—seemingly no different from that of other

men and likewise devoted to the things of this world—is plunged into eternity.

The Christian worker lives and labors, in this world, with all his power and all this will, but he lives in the after-life and for the after-life, until the time when it will please the Lord to call His faithful servant to peace eternal.

With this hope, and calling upon your work the most abundant blessing of Heaven, We give you, from our heart, our paternal apostolic blessing.

## Lithuanian Appeal to the UN

P. ZADEIKIS

*Minister of Lithuania to the United States*

*A Letter addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations,  
October 4, 1950.*

IN MY note to you of October 31, 1949, with which I transmitted a memorandum, dated October 3, 1949, from the Supreme Lithuanian Committee of Liberation (unofficial spokesman for the Soviet-enslaved Lithuanians), pertaining to the genocidal character of the Soviet occupation of Lithuania, I stated that the Lithuanian people are unanimous in believing that the time has come for the United Nations to make a determined effort to prevail upon the Soviet Union to abandon its attempt to exterminate the Lithuanian people by means of brutal mass deportations, and to restore to the Lithuanian nation its fundamental rights and independence of which they have been deprived by the unprovoked Soviet Russian aggression when, upon the unilateral decision of the Kremlin,

the Red Army invaded Lithuania on June 15, 1940, in violation of the existing treaties and solemn engagements, described in the statement of the United States Government of July 23, 1940, as "devious processes."

As Soviet expansionism is the main cause of tension in various parts of the world today, which has resulted in the Korean crisis, so the same Soviet expansionism was responsible for the Baltic crisis in 1940, especially when in 1939 Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany joined hands in the unholy alliance of conspiracy. Soviet diplomacy, instead of complying with the principles of the Atlantic and the United Nations Charters, is bending all its efforts on propaganda to convince distant countries, and to intimidate neighboring countries, concerning the le-

gality of the occupation and of the annexation in 1940 of Lithuania and the other Baltic countries, which they accomplished by means of military force and of the Soviet type of elections which they prefer to call a plebiscite. The plain truth is that a plebiscite has never been held in Lithuania and that the Soviet type of elections served only as a device to keep the reins of government in the hands of a minority against the will of the majority of the people.

### FOREIGN ENSLAVEMENT

The conscience of the civilized world, however, refuses to believe that a sovereign and independent country like Lithuania, a country imbued with traditions of independence in the past, and a nation predominantly Roman Catholic, would voluntarily exchange its liberties and independence for foreign enslavement of the type for which the Soviet dictatorship is notorious. Human Rights as they are defined in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, are unthinkable in countries under Russian Bolshevism.

### EVIDENCE OF GENOCIDE

Though the Soviet Union is a member of the United Nations, it has paid no heed to the rights of others, and the situation described in the above mentioned memorandum, instead of improving, has become worse, especially where the farmers are concerned. Permit me to recall to your attention certain parts of that memorandum: "Authentic information from (occupied) Lithuania has produced evidence of the extent of the crime of genocide committed by the Soviets. It contains lists of the people deported and of the people put to death in different parts of Lithuania. We are prepared to sub-

mit this material on demand (when the need arises)." Some of these lists have now reached this country.

Concerning mass deportations, the memorandum says: "Mass deportations were carried out parallel with individual arrests (when the prisons were filled to capacity, this human cargo was then put into cattle cars and shipped eastward to remote parts of the Soviet Union); six waves of mass deportations ravaged the country in the period from 1944 to the middle of 1949:

1. In July, August, and September, 1945;
2. On February 16, 1946;
3. In July-August, and October-November, 1947;
4. On May 22, 1948;
5. On March 24-27, 1949;
6. In June, 1949."

And quoting from a recent pamphlet entitled: *Some Aspects of the Soviet Russian Rule in Occupied Lithuania—Ten Years of Lithuania's Sufferings under Foreign Tyranny*: "Ominous rumors have reached Western Europe and the United States that a new wave of deportations from Lithuania took place in March, 1950." The whole of Lithuania has been affected by these seven deportation waves. It is estimated that about a half million people have been affected by these proceedings.

Persecution of intellectuals is based on their lack of enthusiasm for the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist ideology. Since 1948 it was the clergy, the teachers and the farmers who have suffered most. Sixty per cent of the clergy has been liquidated; the remaining teachers are threatened and intimidated; special measures are taken against the farmers. Individual farmers are accused of supporting the partisans (underground resistance) and are charged with being relatives of the

refugees and DP's. Charges and accusations result in deportations. Homes of the deported farmers are often burned or turned over to the Bolshevik activists (*Istrebiteli*). Unbearable taxes and compulsory deliveries in kind of unreasonable quotas plague all the farmers. Non-compliance with those measures results in deportation for several years. In the district of Mariampole 153 farmers were thus sentenced in a single performance of Communist justice. The transfer of farmers from their own farms to abandoned farms is also practiced. A farmer is ordered by the MGB officials to give up his farm and to move within one hour to another farm left behind by a deportee or a refugee. These transfers are carried out under appalling conditions. Farm collectivization often assumes a genocidal aspect; more than one-third of the farmers have already been affected by collectivization. Farmers holding more than fifteen hectares are regarded as "exploiters." The "exploiters" are not admitted to the collective farms. In order to make room for Russian colonists, the farmers are driven from their farmsteads under the slightest pretext.

Even that is not enough. A notice published in December, 1948, in the *Tarybu Lietuva* (Soviet Lithuania), and signed by A. S. Trofimov (a Russian official of the Lithuanian Communist Party), referred to a farmers' revolt against collectivization. However, according to the above mentioned memorandum, no revolt had taken place; the Communist Party had wished to use this as a pretext for the expediting of the collectivization program and for the bringing in of more Russian settlers to work in these "kolchozes." The MGB officers are authorized to eliminate the local population by any means that suit their purpose. The picture of the pres-

ent-day life of the Lithuanian farmer is grim indeed. *To save the farming population is Lithuania's main concern at the present time.*

#### NOTE TO STATE DEPARTMENT

In my note of April 3, 1945, to the Honorable Secretary of State, I stated that "my country, a victim of Nazi-Soviet invasions, while hoping for security supported by a new international organization (U. N.) is at this very moment waiting with great anxiety for immediate remedy against the fear of extermination . . . when so many thousands (of innocent Lithuanians) are being driven eastward by the Soviet 'liberator.'" In this connection may I invite your attention to the following statements from an *Aide Memoire*, dated July 27, 1950, submitted to the United States Department of State by the three accredited Baltic representatives in Washington:

Communist terror and annihilation of the population continue unabated; people disappear in the streets or from their homes. Mass deportations are being carried out quite methodically; thus, innocent victims find themselves in slave labor camps in remote parts of Russia where death is the only relief for their suffering. The official representatives of the Baltic States, and organizations of the Baltic nationals, have on several occasions appealed to the United Nations, the most representative international body, to intervene for the purpose of stopping or, at least, investigating these barbaric acts practiced in the Baltic States by a member of the United Nations. So far, no action has been taken by the United Nations.

After bringing to the attention of the United Nations the picture of the plight of the Lithuanian people in general, and of the farmers in particular, under the present regime of the Russian occupation, I hope that among the sixty members of the present United

Nations General Assembly there are statesmen who will recognize the timeliness and the merits of this communi-

cation, and that they will press for proper inquiry and adjustment of the problem.



### ***Confessional Parties***

History, however, never stops, and the wheel of human fate rolls inexorably on. Although it is no crime to be tired, we have to put our weariness on one side and, faced with the new problems of a new world, try to devise new solutions. My own personal opinion is that Christian Democracy, which has come to stay as a movement in modern history, must find a new aspect. The thought has struck me that the experience gained in many countries shows clearly that the confessional allegiances of political parties constitute a grave danger to the permanent message of Christianity. I am afraid that, as soon as a political party is reputed to be a "Christian" party, all its mistakes, all its timidities and all the injustices in which it may be associated or compromised, will take on the guise of blessed mistakes, holy timidities and sacred injustices.

The problem of today is not so much one of a Christian Democratic party, as one of Christians in democracy working with all men of good will to reconcile true justice with true liberty.—*The Marquis Charles D'Aragon in PEOPLE & FREEDOM, June-July, 1950.*



### **THE CATHOLIC MIND**

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